The Pulpit

A Journal of Contemporary Preaching

Cecil Northcott:

The Expansion of the Christian Faith

David G. Buttrick	•	The Children at Play
Mark A. Talney	•	Church and Democracy
John W. Meister	•	Man's Fourth Adjustment
A. Wilburn Beasley	•	The Hitch-Hiker
Burt E. Coody	•	New Age and New Man
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ROY C. DELAMOTTE • IS PERSONALITY SACRED?

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PULPIT POST

For Reply, See July Memo

SIR: I can't believe The Pulpit is willing to rest at the position of the June Memo, and especially not at the statement: "Truth that is obvious from the start is truism to the end and has less than nothing to do with preaching." That assertion depends upon and reveals a rather exclusive definition of preaching. Being obvious scarcely detracts from the urgency of truth or from the necessity for awakening that truth with power in persons—a difficult job. Hid in plain sight, obvious truths which are not really deep motives in people certainly have a claim on our preaching.

You caricature the preacher who for his congregation "predigests the pablum he finds." Many of us, of course, have tried to preach truths which we ourselves have not really digested! I'm told pablum is nourishing and good for babes. As you may know from domestic experience, an accurate job of feeding a babe is not necessarily less skilled or less valuable than setting a sizzling steak before a strong man. St. Paul was not above ladling out milk where milk was required. The object of the verb "preach" is "people" and not "sermon."

I question the wisdom and the realism of an editorial policy which comes a Procrustean definition preaching. One preacher must prea in many ways to many needs. Can your magazine present effective m els of these various efforts? What ab a sermon whose sole design is *to p suade* men to acknowledge Christ L of their lives? Call it truism if y will, but that also is preaching, is not?

What congregation was moved these words in your April issue? " this is a highly symbolic way of sayi that beyond and through death, G who created life in the first instan and continues to create it in every stance, can also recreate life out death; he can take our embodied p sonalities—and that is what our p sonalities always in fact are—and make them after the image of his S whose death and resurrection a therefore types of our own. 'Christ t first fruits . . .'—but we, after his pa tern and in the power of his resurre tion, are given by God the perfect fru tion of our personality as of our wo in the 'spiritual body,' in continui with this present material body, whi God will create afresh out of the wre of our mortal existence."

That is wonderful! It has ever thing—except that it simply is not or

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The Pulpit

A Journal of Contemporary Preaching

LUME XXIX JULY 1958 No. 7

Memo:

NE man, at least, took me up on last month's bid for some conversation, dialogue, exchange these pages. And wouldn't you know it—of all e June authors he could have agreed or disagreed th, it had to be T.A.G. who offended first! Friend Versteeg's letter is across the page in Pulpit Post so I don't have to summarize his very proper indigna- n with me. Maybe I can summarize a few reac- ns to the reaction, though.

I hope I don't give my own case entirely away ıen I admit that the indignation is proper. What mean is that my own Memo was obviously very ɔppily written if it could be interpreted as Robert ersteeg got it. The writer—and the preacher, ɔn't forget—who feels his point has been missed ıs only himself to blame. Somewhere, somehow he ıs muffed its sharpening. But why else does he rite—or preach—except to sharpen with his pro- ssional skills the truth that is in him and must ıt? Congregations may have their own hearing mitations, but that is no comfort to us in assessing ır failure. Knowledge of the particular barriers efore us is what we begin with when plotting our ɔmmunication (that is an advantage that parish inister-preachers have over itinerant prophets ho are never exactly sure what they're up gainst). Meanings that don't get through are far ıore a judgment on the launcher than a comment n the receiver.

So I bow to the judgment. But I do not grovel. lumsy I plainly was, for I obviously gave the idea ıat I am contemptuous of clarity in preaching— hich idea is, was and ever shall be farthest from ıy mind. The communicator who cannot get his oint across, whatever the level of his hearers' com- rehension, can take no comfort in any effort he ıvished on the attempt. For the preacher this is ever casual failure; when handling matter as life- nd-death serious as the gospel, every failure to get hrough is tragic failure. Clarity is our job, clarity t any and every level of comprehension, clarity in ur apprehension of which level we are to operate t in any given situation. Milk or meat, pablum or ɔaté de foie gras—whatever is digestible, whatever ıourishes. We must know foods and the fed, and ıake the right matches.

However, once that is clear let me reiterate that ronouncing the obvious is *never* a clarification of he gospel—at any level. The "obvious," I take it, is whatever is patently, patly true, and the gospel never, never is that. That everything would be nicer if everyone were nicer, is the obvious. That it wouldn't be bad if everyone were better, is the obvious. That we'd be less anxious if we didn't worry so much, is the obvious. And don't sneer that I've reduced the thing to absurdity; be grateful that you have lived in such shelter that you don't know how much preaching never gets beyond such tautological, truistic trivia. Milk is milk, it is not pap.

The gospel is not obvious, the obvious is not gospel. It is *not* obvious that God is in Christ, that God is love, that God speaks in the Bible, that the Cross is for our salvation, that Christ is the Lord of our lives. Our good news is not obvious; to the mind attuned only to the obvious it will always be too good to be true. It is *not* obvious what our response to God's goodness must be, where our obedience shall carry us, what our gratitude shall involve us in. All of this has to be worked out, over and over again worked out, explicated, illustrated, expounded. That is the clarification to which we preachers are bidden. But always we clarify marvel and mystery; we do not just trick up the obvious.

Our reading, our studying ought always to be aimed at clarifying our own vision of what the whole gospel is—how it is between God and man. That is not an easy picture. It is full of nuance and implication. Yet it is that picture we have to get across, larger or smaller, in greater or less detail—but never caricatured, cheapened. Sometimes we include articles in The Pulpit which are intended to illumine for us, in terms comprehensible to the theologically educated minister if not always to his nonspecialist parishioners, some of the shadowed places in the big picture. Such, I take it, was the piece—Dr. Pittenger's article on death—from which protestor Versteeg quoted in his letter. Surely there is no area where we can talk more nonsense unless we check our sources; surely Prof. Pittenger is a competent guide to those sources. Of course, none of us will preach to his congregation as the teacher speaks to us. We will say it as we must to get it through to our people. But won't we say what Dr. Pittenger said?

Sermons in The Pulpit are another thing altogether. They are exercises in clarification against which we check our own. All heed to the man who asks more variety there. But oh, watch the soft manner; how firm is its matter?

T. A. G.

An Enduring Dynamic
Newly Given

The Expansion of the Christian Faith

By Cecil Northcott

AT the autumn assizes at Lewes, England, in 1852 F. W. Robertson of Brighton preached a sermon before Her Majesty's judges entitled "The Kingdom of Truth." His text came from John 18: 37: "Pilate therefore said unto him, 'Art thou a king then?' Jesus answered, 'Thou sayest that I am a king. To this end was I born.' " Although it was a missionary sermon, Robertson never used the name. Concerned with the expansion of Christ's kingdom, the preacher never referred to a foreign country. Preaching in the heyday of 19th century missions, he did not clutter himself with arguments for them. His opening paragraph stated his case: "The church is the kingdom of God on earth, and the whole fabric of the Christian religion rests on the monarchy of Christ. The Hebrew prisoner who stood before the Roman judge claimed to be the king of men: and eighteen centuries have only verified his claim. There is not a man bearing the Christian name, who does not in one form or another acknowledge him to be the sovereign of his soul."

Christ's claim to be the king of men, to be the ruler of a kingdom of truth is the prime foundation for Christianity's assertion that it is a universal faith for all mankind. Without his lordship Christianity becomes just another religion, a corpus of useful teaching, a set of instructions for the good life. Keep him on the throne and you have a final focus point for everything. Indeed some of the customary arguments which are offered to bolster the case for the missionary work of the church are flabbily innocuous once the kingship of Christ is acknowledged for there is nothing more to be said, only obedience to his commands to be done.

Yes, but what sort of king is he? That was Pilate's problem and ours too. Was his kingdom founded on force? Too often the church has believed that to be true, and by the use of the phy cal sword has compelled men to believe in Ch the king. Was it a kingdom founded on infall authority? Is that a kingly prescription for exte ing Christ's kingdom? Is it a kingdom of reas extending its sway by the piling up of eviden and rational argument? Christ rests his royal rig of kingship on his capacity as witness bearer. came to bear witness to the truth. "To this e was I born" he tells Pilate, "for this cause cam into the world." And the truth is *himself*. He is Truth, shaped, fashioned and made human; a the expansion of the Christian faith in the life mankind is always to be tested by the standard truth which is himself.

A Matter of History

Since Robertson preached his missionary serm on the eve of the day of judgment in the town Lewes, the Christian faith has had a hundred a more years of expansion. In every quarter of t inhabited globe there are some signs of the rei of Christ, and the volume of faithful witness be ing to his kingship on the part of multitudes of t common man is one of the glories of the past ce tury. But it is still possible for a secular histori such as Sir Winston Churchill to write about th period and either consciously ignore the wh business or turn a blind eye to it. Whatever t reason for which Sir Winston says nothing abo one of the supreme glories of the English speaki peoples, this king and his strange kingdom sin the days of Pilate have been a bother to t Caesars, the kaisers, the dictators, and to the pa liamentary democracies as well.

It is true, of course, that during this century th expansion of the Christian faith has been oddly an often mistakenly mixed up with the expansion the Western colonial powers. You could not ha "empire builders" going about their affairs in sin cerity without carrying their religion with them too many of them unfortunately forgot all about and it is they rather than the faithful practitione of the Christian faith who have given "missions and "colonialism" a bad name. Neither could yo have the official missionaries of the churches goin out to "foreign parts" as emasculated neutrals com pletely devoid of any national pride. Many of the

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erdid their pride of belonging to the West and rticularly to Britain, and it is easy enough for us see the mistakes they made in India and China. cently I was looking through some reports of one our missionary organizations for the year 1908; e of them had the description of a visit made to e East in that year by one of its secretaries. He tlined his itinerary from Gibraltar to Shanghai d his final proud comment was "To think all this longs to us." To think now after fifty years that rdly any of it does belong to us is to be reminded the revolution that has happened, and also that ere the hand of imperial Britain has been lifted e marks of this king who announced his kingship fore Pilate remain.

Judgment Still to Come

The judgment of history has yet to be made on is period. We are still too near it, too emotionally volved for sober judgment. What rich material, at dramatic moments the future historian will ve at his disposal. I suspect that one of those oments will be the morning of Good Friday in 26 when Lord Halifax (then Lord Irwin) sailed to Bombay Harbor as viceroy of India and re-sed to land because it was the day on which Christ e King was crucified. The pomp of imperial India ll away before the King of kings. Another might ell be the simple, dedicated story I heard the other ay of the Englishwoman, Miss Daisy Wakefield, ed eighty, who lives alone in the remote Sahara esert oasis of Tamanrasset. She has been there r the last twenty years carrying on the self-im-osed task of translating the Bible into the Berber nguage and intends to go on with it to the end her days. Both viceroy and woman missionary, olitician and humble servant, are representative of e subjects of Christ's kingdom who by their edience proclaim their allegiance to him and so xpand his kingdom.

The Western world in its enthusiasm for the xpansion of Christ's kingdom made a legion of istakes which from our vantage point of time we nd it easy enough to see. If we had a chance of eginning the missionary movement all over again, e would do differently; but we may be confident of ne thing—we would make a different series of mis-akes. Three facts about the present situation need o be noted. These were admirably summarized by rofessor Walter Freytag of Hamburg University in n address at the recent Ghana Assembly of the nternational Missionary Council reported in the *nternational Review of Missions* (April 1958).

Sphere Being Limited

First, the sphere of work of Western missions is ecoming limited. No longer is it possible for mis-onary policy to be constructed in London, Basle, erlin, Paris and New York as if the kingship of hrist were a Western creation and preserve. The ery name "missions" is a handicap in some areas f the world because it smacks of the old regime in hich the West appeared to be patronizing the ast. The churches which have grown up as a result f the last century's work must find their own way, make their own life and become genuinely indigenous.

Secondly, there is a "lost directness" in the pattern of missions largely because the person called "the missionary" is no longer the supreme figure in the pattern that he once was. He is no longer sure of himself in the country to which he goes and within the life of the churches he serves. Western missionary organizations were brought into existence largely for the purpose of sending out missionaries, and most of their faithful supporters and subscribers still think in those terms.

Thirdly, this inherited image of missions is in process of sharp change, both West and East, and for the West it means, to quote Professor Freytag, "that mission does not consist in missionaries only."

If this analysis be true, where do we find a dynamic today for the total mission of the Christian faith, this outreaching and penetration into the life of the world which a previous generation thought of almost entirely in geographical terms but which we must think of in new ways? I believe that dynamic lies in the kingship of Christ and a renewed understanding of what the Kingdom of God means? In doing so I do not think we are likely to be in any danger of by-passing the church; for this generation, at any rate, is committed to a "church-centric" conception of the total mission of the Christian faith. But a renewed emphasis on the kingship of Christ would lift us away from our geographical confines, from our excessive concentration on what has been called "churchification" with all its attendant apparatus of government, organization and finance. This king whom Pilate saluted is neither of the East nor the West; his kingdom is without racial or cultural frontiers. There are three realms where Christ's kingship needs to be asserted and which represent for this generation crucial challenges in the total mission of the Christian faith.

Segregated Church

The first is *race relationships*. I am not aware that Christ himself ever said much about them, but one glance at him as king settles the matter for Christians. There can be no barriers of race, color or language; those who attempt to erect them or maintain them are in the direct line of those who deny his kingship and his kingdom. It is easy enough to say that from this pulpit, but it must be said everywhere, in all countries and in all languages, and the church must say it to herself too. We ought not to go on condemning apartheid in the political, cultural, social and economic life of South Africa while we condone it in the life and worship of the Christian church. Let us honestly admit that the church for the most part round the world is a segregated church. Christ's kingdom is divided and his kingship is denied at the very point where its unity is most essential. I am aware of most of the human problems involved in this ecclesiastical apartheid and they are not to be solved easily and painlessly, but the church ought not to go on wearing blinkers about this much longer. We are failing in our allegiance to the kingship of Christ, and no

(Continued on page 8)

By Roy DeLamotte

IS PERSONALITY

THE "sacredness of human personality" has become such an absolute in our time that one approaches this sacred cow, meat-axe in hand, with some trepidation. The creature is so monstrous, however, and has spawned such monsters of confusion and error that it is about time we put her out of her misery.

One searches the pages of the New Testament in vain for any evidence that its writers considered as sacred that cramped and imperfect externalization of our creative inmost spirit which psychologists label "personality," as distinct from its creator, the self or soul.

If Paul was interested in anything at all, it was in something which was *not* human personality or any normal part of personality in any sense currently used in the church today. His interest lay in some strange, out-of-this-world factor, which came into man from beyond himself, called Spirit. Similarly, if Jesus considered anything about man of "inestimable worth" (to quote contemporary Scripture) it was obviously not his body, nor his mind, nor any of the functions or activities of his this-worldly side or personality. It was that something in him which related to another world. It was the self unextended from invisible seed into manifold functions of observable personality. It was that for which one allowed his body to be killed, his family to be estranged, his sexual yearnings to go unfulfilled, his education unsought, his message unversified, his beloved personality, in short, crucified. It was, to use a word no longer popular among cultivated clerics, his soul.

Self-Expression

Our contemporary reverence for personality has led directly to that divine right of self-expression so subversive of genuine Christian morality. In the pulpit this has reared a generation of ministers incapable of a single personality-stultifying "Thou shalt not!" In the public school and church school it has dissolved all intellectual and moral standa in favor of majority votes by children or a lescents on everything from curricula to pre-mari sex relations. In the home it has bred young peo incapable of self-denial, teamwork, or even the m elementary adjustments necessary to successful p ticipation in marriage. In the church it has ab ished the man of God who called a sinful world repentance and has enthroned the "regular gu who builds gymnasiums instead of sanctuaries a who makes the church a human fellowship inste of a divine leaven within human society.

On the positive side we should not omit all th good causes in which the church has participat for bad reasons: We preach racial tolerance not b cause God commands us to do justly and lo mercy, but because intolerance damages hum personality. (We do not practice it because th would call for self-denial instead of self-expressio We are concerned about politics not because G hates crookedness and oppression but because slu and high prices effect personality. (We do not a tively participate because politics involves slande persecution, and cross-bearing, and this mig blight our own creative personalities.)

Contact with Spirit

We know all about this world, but when t Negro or the wage earner lies on his deathbed, t only good news we can bring him is of civil righ legislation or a new minimum wage! At the ve most, we reassure him that his sacred personali will surely go with him into the next world whe there will be ample opportunity for those ultimat growth and self-expression.

If this life is the only life, and if those extensio of self which psychologists call "personality" a the true self, then personality actually is sacre man's highest achievement is self-development a expression, and man's greatest sin is the massi social frustrations which blight the individua creative human talents and urges. But if the premises are false, then our goal is not simply a earthly objectification of God's will which man c taste on his dinner plate and touch in his pay e velope, nor is it the joyful fellowship of those huma engineers who labor together toward this end. O goal is rather that man should somehow establi

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ACRED?

ntact with the world of Spirit, have an abundant
more meaningful than an abundance of person-
ty skills and experiences of "community," and
ould prepare for a form of existence in which the
pty garment of personality has returned to the
rth from whence it came. This orientation alone
n give perspective, sustained driving power, and
lanced truth to those who would build a divine
man kingdom.

The apostles of personality perhaps need remind-
g that even registered voters can die, and for this
ason, our first concern is with the parishioner's
e in its wholeness—here and hereafter—and with
s permanent self which only fleetingly extends
elf in a mind and personality.

The Christian Ideal

The Christian ideal is not Michelangelo joyously
pressing his almost superhuman personality
rough St. Peter's in Rome, but Peter himself sub-
itting, as tradition has it, to suffering and death.
is not Schweitzer, the interpreter of Bach, but
chweitzer laying down scholarship and music and
reer for the people of Africa. It is not the work-
gman laboring in joyful fellowship with a profit-
aring mill owner, but the older sister who stays
me from college at a monotonous job and denies
erself an entire universe of cultural values in order
at a younger brother may enjoy such benefits.

The Christian motivation, similarly, is not that
e battle for social justice because intolerance de-
ies some illiterate potential Tolstoy his chance to
ecome a literary genius without benefit of conver-
on. Nor do we fight for safe mill machinery to
rotect some talented youngster's hands so that he
ay end as a Schweitzer interpreting Bach but
eaf to the call of his own Africa. We are called to
ore fundamental work than transforming socially
aladjusted slum-children into spiritually malad-
sted college boys or into temperamental church
oir tenors, adept at self-expression but incapable
f self-denial. An earthly kingdom of morally
unted Wagners and egotistical Cellinis is a goal
nworthy of our calling.

The Christian motive in social ethics is threefold:
o obey God's command that we ourselves stand
r righteousness; to proclaim the judgment of God
pon those who oppress their fellows and so flaunt
His will; and to show Christ's love and compassion for men as children of God and as immortal spirits —not as potential creators of personality values in music, poetry, or labor-management relations. Our primary concern is the self unextended which cannot come to any permanent creative self-expression through personality because the mind-body-personality vehicle is perishable.

Treasure in Heaven

The abundant life Christ brought relates to the unextended self totally submitted to God in self-denial, suffering, and, if need be, death. The rewards of Christ's Kingdom are different *in kind* from the sacrifices that precipitate them: they are a treasure in heaven that informs our permanent and essential being within, and are distinct from the processes of personality which are only their blurred and imperfect reflection. Until we grasp this point, we shall never understand why Christ should have chosen an early cross instead of a Goethe's full life and poet's pen.

We need not to be traitors to the cause of social justice to affirm that our earthly blueprints of righteousness are mere children's scribbles in the light of that Kingdom which eye hath not seen nor ear heard. Nor need we countenance the frustration of any earth-bound brother's hunger for self-expression simply because we have seen in him an unrecognized spark of splendor which made Plato fumble for analogies and Shakespeare feel thwarted and baffled by his seeming triumphs. But we can put first things first and repent of our idolatrous emphasis upon things which are transient and incapable of giving our human nature its true meaning and measure.

And for some of our parishioners we shall come to our labors far too late to do anything but listen, observe, and marvel at that measure.

I once called on an elderly little lady whose body was bowed by a lifetime of labor and trouble. She spoke of entering a textile mill as a child laborer, so small she carried a box to stand on. The few cents an hour she received for an eleven-hour day went to a hard-drinking father, and her only comprehension of a strike was that it was a chance for her and the other children to run and play outdoors. Her thin voice poured out the ancient story

of a brutal and unimaginative social system which had clearly blighted in her any shoots of personality we might consider cultural or creative. But toward the close of her little life history, the tired voice took on a peaceful vitality and warmth as she spoke of climbing the stairs in childhood to her attic room. There, far from the stultifying drudgery of a mill village and hidden from the eye of a drunken father and an uninterested stepmother, she communed with a different and a fairer world. The sad face softened and the sinewy hands relaxed as she concluded.

"And God was with me, all the way."

This has always been the supreme experience life affords, and it has been the experience of humanity down the darkest valley and most tortuously high passes of human history. But to affirm it today is considered by some a betrayal of suffering humanity, whereas in actual fact it is the experience which alone gives real dignity, perspective, and direction to little lives whose days fly swifter than a weaver's shuttle and whose years are insubstantial as a dream.

Expansion

(Continued from page 5)

amount of criticizing South Africa, or the United States of America will give us an invulnerable alibi. For the British people one of the practical tests of race relationships lies now in the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland. We are committed there to a policy of "partnership" between the races, a venture which is critical not only for the future of Africa but also for the whole human family. Let us be clean, clear and Christian on ground which is our own and where we can do something still to proclaim the kingship of Christ. I, for one, would feel much less uneasy about scarifying South Africa if we were less sanctimonious about the state of affairs in the Federation.

The second is the realm of *religion*. This may seem an odd choice as one of the central issues for the mission of the church, but it is right at the heart of the whole enterprise. According to those best equipped to know, Christianity is only now beginning the encounter with the older, entrenched and established religions of the world—Islam, Buddhism and Hinduism. Only now after more than a century of acquaintance is Christianity beginning to know, meet and do battle with the great religions which do not accept the lordship of the Hebrew prisoner arraigned before Pilate. That is a sobering thought for any who conceive the mission of the church in terms of years, who have any lighthearted view as to when the task will be finished. Many of our optimistic nineteenth century missionary hymns need overhauling in this respect!

In his brilliant and succint survey of this problem in the pamphlet *Resurgent Religions* Bish Kulandran of the Church of South India points that one of the reasons for the revival of these ol religions is the influence of Christianity in the E and the decline of it in the West. On both grou the new and mainly young prophets of the ol religions see reasons for the eager proclamation their national faiths, and to commend them to new democracies of the East. It is just here t we in the West can be of major assistance to churches in the East. We can assist them with t dedicated, scholarly knowledge which will help th to meet this resurgence of the older religions at point where saintliness and scholarship meet create a formidable combination. Is it too much hope that contemporary Cambridge might prod a few more Henry Martyns? It is now a hundr and fifty years since Henry Martyn left Cambric for the East to begin his lifelong study of east religions, and to present to them the claims Christ the king of men. One of the desperate nee of the Christian world mission is for a new race Henry Martyns to share in this encounter of t religions of the world and the kingship of Chris

Creation of Culture

Linked with this is the Lordship of Christ in t realm of *culture*. Christian evangelism does not e with the conversion of the individual—it only sta there. The mission of the church does not end wi the establishment of churches; that is only the b ginning of the job of proclaiming the reign of Chri We have that task here in Britain in the midst a secular society which still lives on the capital the Christian decencies and still pays some lip ser ice to Christian values. But in non-Christian cou tries the task is doubly urgent in view of the ti groups of committed Christians living in radica non-Christian surroundings. They either sink a are submerged in the culture of their national pa tern, or they can be the dynamic minority to gi the social, moral and public life new standards conduct which have the marks of Christian righ eousness about them. Only here and there in t East and Africa has Christianity penetrated depth into the culture and thought-forms of i digenous peoples producing some forms of pub righteousness which can survive the welter of gra and greed which appear to accompany the inaugur tion of new nations. This is an endless task f Christianity, one which sometimes looks as if cannot possibly be accomplished. If it took t Christian faith a thousand years to mould the cu ture and morals of western Europe how long w it take in Africa and the East? To that question t answer hardly lies entirely with us. But at least part of it does, and that part is our continued ass ciation with those scattered minority groups acro the world often called the "younger churches." W are subjects together of the one king and the on kingdom. Gone are the days when we "sent" the something they did not have. We are all recipien now of the one gospel and all stand to be tested b the one test of obedience to him who said, "I am king. To this end was I born."

The Children at Play

By David G. Buttrick

We piped to you and you did not dance;
We wailed, and you did not weep.
Luke 7:32

HOW different is the world today from the world when Jesus walked the earth. The mixmaster s replaced the grinding wheel, the drinking foun- in the village well. A Chevrolet is swifter than a mel (if a little more expensive). The world has anged but not the world of childhood. In Jesus' y youngsters played at Hide and Seek, Hop otch, had dolls and dice and even checkers. As ildren today will parade in high heels and a bath- wel pretending to be a bride at her wedding, so, ng ago, children would prance in silks and bangles the same games of "make believe." "To what all I liken this generation?" spoke Jesus as he atched the young playing at weddings and fu- erals. "To what shall I liken this generation?"—to ildren who stand apart refusing to play at "let's etend." "We piped and you did not dance; we ailed, and you did not weep." Could we hear his ice above our artificial age, would we not be con- emned by the same simile? Are we petulant children" unwilling to lose ourselves in the moving oods of life?

I

Life is like a child's game. Have you noticed how ildren at play will move from inane laughter to udden tears? So life is a complex of joy and sorrow, ain, pleasure, trial and ease, all wrapped up in a pan of years. Look back at your own life and see hat it has been. Remember the shyness of court- hip, the urgency of love and the triumph of child- irth, the exhilaration of troubles borne, the glory f forgiveness. Remember family jokes shared in joy r the choke of loss when tears spilled salty on the oul. Life is not a summer day, blue and bright; it s more akin to a tropical storm, unpredictable and hanging. A young soldier, who lay dying in a base ospital, received word of the birth of a son and ould both laugh and cry saying: "O God, isn't that just like life." It is. Life like child's play is made of many moods.

"We piped and you did not dance." The truth is this, that we do not respond to life: the tragic fails to trouble us and of joy we are suspicious. Seldom are we entirely involved in life; more often we are remote, even detached. We live as men dream, seeing ourselves and all the others passively, scarcely awake to life's full meaning. Perhaps it is because we experience so much of modern life at second hand, in the newspapers or paraded across a television screen. Ours is a world in which aviator can drop a bomb and be well away before he hears the dying shriek or the orphaned wail. Ours is a world in which a scientist can examine cancerous tissue and never know the soul for whom it spells slow pain. On our earth a man may be hired and fired without so much as a handshake, hello and good-by. We sense but are we sensitive? We see, but do we often feel? Christopher Isherwood begins one of his astonishing short novels with the personal pronoun: "I. I am a camera with its shutter open, quite passive, recording, not thinking. Recording the man shaving at the window opposite and the woman in the kimono washing her hair."[1] Is that it? Have we become human cameras and no longer living souls?

Afraid of Involvement

Or, is it egotism that prevents our entering into life and living it with passion? Have you noticed how a girl of eight or ten, when playing at dolls with younger children, will straighten up and stand away when an adult enters the room. Self-consciousness is present. Self-esteem is at stake. So we hold aloof from life lest our tears be a noticed weakness or our laughter be labeled idiocy. We are afraid to forget ourselves, our prides, in honest passion. Listen and be wary! Profound joy or profound sorrow will sweep clean the soul of self-concern and link a man with others. A social worker, lecturing to her class of students, advised: "I try never to get too close to people. I avoid emotional entanglements. They take so much out of one." She is right. We are afraid to be taken out of ourselves and into the lives of others. "We piped and you did not dance; we wailed, and you did not weep." "This

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[1] *The Berlin Stories* (N. Y.: New Directions, 1954.)

generation . . ." said Jesus, and he might have been speaking to us.

II

There is the trouble: We cannot be rid of Jesus. He haunts the subconscious of the race. His simplicity stuns our sophistication. His compassion condemns our hardness of heart. We are forever bothered by this passionate Christ, who wept when Lazarus died, whose tears slipped to the earth without shame. He laughed at weddings and waded in the flowered fields. He suffered as every man does suffer, and knew despair, and cried as an animal in pain, and was human. And that is precisely what troubles us: *he was too human.* How much better for us had he been less emotional. How much easier to revere an unruffled savior, cocksure and serene. But, he was human and in his sight we see ourselves as less than human. Epictetus, the stoic, pleaded that the best way of life was never to care for anything or any man: "If you kiss your child or your wife," said he, "say to yourself that you are kissing a human being, for then if death strikes it you will not be disturbed." Jesus dared to kiss the lips of Judas, and how great the heart hurt of Jesus. Jesus cared. Jesus loved. And so—inevitably—Jesus suffered.

In him we see God: not a God remote in some resplendent heaven, but a God who enters human life to share in human sorrow and human joy. Here is a God who feels! Does that sound scandalous? We had sooner speak of a God far distant, of a force "X to the nth," impersonal as gravity. To think of a God who feels, rejoices, mourns, angers —this offends the intellect. Yet, what else do we see in Christ and the cross he bravely bore? In the last act of Marc Connelly's *The Green Pastures* God is portrayed as an old man in his heavenly office looking down at the earth and wondering how to help his human "chillun." All of a sudden, a cross-shaped shadow slips across the stage. "What is it, Lawd?" cries Gabriel. "It's awful important," God speaks slowly, "It's awful important"—his words seem to stumble—"Did he mean dat even God must suffer?" Our faith proclaims that in Jesus Christ even God suffers, lives, dies as we. This is no dusty doctrine dispensed by a dutiful church; this is real. The pain you know, God knows. The fears you feel, he shares. Your tears are his sorrow. Your laughter is echoed in eternal mirth. In Jesus Christ God enters life and lives.

III

"We piped and you did not dance; we wailed, and you did not weep." Now the question for us is this: How can we be as human as He was human? Nothing is more deceptive than to manufacture an emotion you do not truly feel. Sorrow and joy unless they are spontaneous are as grotesque as the dramatic masks—a mouth turned up and a mouth turned down. How can we be intensely human?

We begin to be human when we acknowledge our relatedness. If, in the newspaper, I read of an accident on the highway, of revolution in Hungary or starvation in Bombay, I am unmoved. The names I find are unfamiliar, the people strangers. But w if I should read that the revolution was on street, that the starvation took the life of my ch what then? Wrote Albert Schweitzer, "No ma ever completely and permanently a stranger to fellow man. Man belongs to man." Life lived in spirit of Christ becomes personal. Every place the face of the earth is our town and every hur being a member of our immediate family. Un God we are all related. The little girl that die the dust of Bombay, she is yours. And the old m a leper in the African marsh, he is yours. So T genov when he had no money to give a beggar h out a hand to touch the diseased hand and kis the withered cheek and spoke, "My brother." ing human is being related one to another.

How can we be as human as God was human? cannot—except the love of God live within us. S sitivity is born of love, else it is stillborn a shrivels in the soul. You cannot participate in a thing you do not love. Can you enter into the m tery of music unless you love music? Can you gr the glory of art unless you adore beauty? In same truth, only as you love God can you se his love. Only as you love your neighbor are y able to share his "person." And, it is the love of self, in the finest sense, that grants an awareness our dearest feelings, the sorrow and the unspok joy. Paul Carroll pictures a servant girl, Bridg who speaks warmly of the priest for whom works: "You see him when he's proud, but I him when he's praying in his little place and tears on his cheeks; . . . you see him when his he is up and fiery like a lion, but I see his head wh it's down low and his words won't come . . . It's l cause . . . I love him . . ."[2] It is love which ope unto us the tragic and the comic in life and lets weep with them that weep and rejoice with th that rejoice. For love is, after all, the gift of Go

"To what shall I liken this generation?" spo Jesus: to children playing at weddings and funer their games of "let's pretend." "We piped and y did not dance; we wailed, and you did not weep "To what," Christ looks on us, "shall I liken *t generation?*" Will you yield yourself to him a dare to bear within your heart the weight of world's tears and laughter? Will you dare to li as he dared live? Listen! "To what shall I liken Christian man?" "We piped and he did dance; wailed and he wept in sorrow." "To what shall liken a Christian man?" To Christ—to Christ t Lord.

[2]Paul Carroll, *Shadow and Substance* (Random House, 1937).

Life's Puzzle

I forced the pieces together,
Whether they belonged or not;
Then blamed the wise Creator
For the tangled mess I got.

C. W. VANDENBERGH

ıe Task of Christians Is to Bring
he Life of Freedom to Light

The Church and Democracy

By Mark A. Talney

WITHIN the living memory of many of us the word "democracy" has stood for the noblest political and social dreams. It was assumed that knowledge increased and scientific progress continued, mankind would in the normal course of events embrace democratic philosophies of life and forms of government. In the nineteenth century the emergence of more than one hundred representative assemblies of varying degrees of democratic practice seemed to justify the faith that democracy, as popular self-government and a noble way of life, was to be the natural goal of political evolution.

But now, this optimistic faith in the inevitability and the invincibility of democracy has given way to world-wide disillusionment, while the word itself has become a symbol of discarded hopes. Since 1918 nation after nation has turned from democracy to some form of totalitarian dictatorship, plunging millions into political, economic, intellectual and spiritual servitude. Nor does it appear that the tide will soon turn for the better. The remaining few democracies of the world remain in critical peril, lending poignancy to Lincoln's anxiety that "government of the people, by the people, and for the people" might perish from the earth.

Each Generation Begins Again

We now confront some truths about democracy that in our days of easy optimism escaped us. We took democracy for granted; we were culpable and careless and apostate. We can no longer take democracy for granted. We see now that it is not inevitable, nor a "city invincible." We see that democracy can be lost and that each generation holds the fate of democracy in its keeping. Kierkegaard, the theologian, said that in the matter of faith, every generation has to begin again. So with democracy!

In a famous essay, written in 1860, John Stuart Mill warned that a nation could lose democracy that had been dearly won. He wrote,

> A people may prefer free government, but if, from indolence, or carelessness, or cowardice, or want of public spirit, they are unequal to the exertions necessary for preserving it; if they will not fight for it when it is directly attacked; if they can be deluded by the artifices to cheat them out of it; if by momentary discouragement, or temporary panic, or a fit of enthusiasm for an individual, they can be induced to lay their liberties at the feet of even a great man, or trust him with power which enables him to subvert their institutions—in all these cases they are more or less unfit for liberty. . . .

How the passing years have justified his warning! With almost uncanny perception he enumerated the factors which contributed to the downfall of democratic forms of government and ways of life in nation after nation, and that within the lifetime of most of us!

The assumption that democracy is simply a method of government has been gaining increasing acceptance. But democracy is more than a method of government—much more. Democracy is a way of life, based on a Christian interpretation of life. When democracy is separated from the Christian understanding of life which gave it birth, and which alone can sustain it as a way of life, democracy itself is doomed to die. A. D. Lindsay well said that democracy is the political name for the religious ideas which Christianity brought into the world.

So with continued threats to democracy, we should take a long, hard look at the dreams of our founding fathers, and ask ourselves whether we are contributing to the preservation and promotion of what they set out to establish, or whether we may actually be subverting the best interest of democracy. For democracy depends, in each generation, on faith in individuals who have learned the responsible use of freedom, individuals willing to make sacrifices on behalf of democracy and voluntarily assume duties which democracy requires. Unless there is a rebirth of such spirit in its citizens, the inner life of democracy decays, bringing the inevitable collapse of the outward form.

In meeting these issues, what is the role of the church, to which we look for guidance and aid as citizens of a great democracy?

First, whatever concerns humanity must concern

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the church. It cannot segregate any area of life as outside of its concern. Ernest Hemingway in his story *For Whom the Bell Tolls* expresses a spirit that reflects the attitude of enlightened Christianity in the matter of social involvement. It was the custom in the town to ring the church bell on the death of a citizen. Often the people came running to find out for whom the bell tolled. On one occasion, in answer to inquiry, this response was given:

> No man is an island of itself; for every man is a piece of a continent, a part of the main; if a clod be washed away by the sea, Europe is the less. Any man's death diminishes me, *because I am involved in mankind. . . .**

That is the answer of the church when asked why it is concerned about what has been happening to the human spirit with the collapse of democratic ways of life: "I am involved with mankind!" It is inexorably involved because it serves the compassionate Christ.

Secondly, the church is drawn into the conflict to preserve and extend democracy because in democracy human possibilities are assured a chance to develop to highest capacity. The creative urge in man, basic in the pursuit of knowledge, in the satisfaction of the instinct for beauty, in art and music and literature, as well as in technological advance, has freedom to express itself within a free society.

Totalitarianism

At this point democracy differs profoundly from dictatorship. When the Nazi revolution broke in Germany, it was with the burning of the Reichstag and the public burning of books, serving notice to the free world what it might expect under such a regime. From that moment the artist had to paint that which was acceptable to the ruling body; the pen was devoted only to the State; the voice of the orator was an echo of the demagogue; the scientist became a black or brown-shirted puppet of the tyranny in power; and the minister in his pulpit uttered platitudes acceptable to his earthly masters. Such were the limitations set upon human creativity and ability, the human soul and mind. How can the church, cherishing the freedom Christ bestows, remain silent while tyranny places shackles on humanity?

Time magazine, apropos of attempts to purge Russian music of bourgeois influences, tells of a Russian cartoon showing a man and a woman seated on a park bench while a bird sings overhead. Says she: "How do you like the nightingale's song?" Says he: "Until I know who wrote the melody, I can say nothing." Only in a democracy is the creative spirit of man given full freedom.

Thirdly, the church flourishes best in the free climate of democracy. It is true, of course, that a Christian can be a Christian in any kind of society —if he is willing to pay the full price. Paul wrote to "saints in Caesar's household." But who would question the fact that the Christian church is operating under extreme difficulties in Russia and China. Not only is the church in those countries restricted in number and influence, but the possibility is that it may gradually pass away as r generations continue to repudiate religion as " opiate of the people."

Recognizing, therefore, that the church can but be involved in the political and ideologi warfare being waged today between democr and forces that seek to destroy it, what should its role in strengthening democracy?

Spiritual Foundations

The church must constantly renew and supp the spiritual foundations of democracy. The in spirit of democracy is *of God*—and God alone c replenish it.

Political freedom first came as a result of t struggle of people of Western Europe for religio freedom in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuri They struggled for the emancipation of the spi of man from the shackles of ecclesiastical traditi and domination. They demanded spiritual liber for mankind. As an inevitable corollary, the emerged, in the name of God, a demand for politi and economic emancipation as well.

These doctrines were transplanted from Euro to England and then to America. Here they becam the inspiration of the first attempts to establish free society in the new world—doctrines whi men found in the Bible, in the gospel of Chri and rightly accepted as the will and purpose God for humanity. The founding fathers of o democracy were motivated by Christian principl The American Revolution was more than rebelli against economic oppression. It was freedom seeki expression. And the Revolution kindled its torch at the flames of great religious convictions abo God, the meaning of life, and the worth and digni of man. It is Christianity which supplied the spi itual basis for democracy. Without such religio sanction and inspiration, democracy shrivels. democracy has shrivelled in some lands, it is becau religious convictions, which undergird all concep of human rights, had been forgotten or denie Only that democracy which renews within itse its spiritual nature can sustain the free life of ma and remain a free society.

Many of the leading spirits instrumental i shaping the Constitution and our institutions r garded this American experiment "as a Divine ad venture in a new type of commonwealth." Thoma Jefferson, who had such great part in framing th Constitution, himself made a compilation of th teaching of Jesus from the gospels as he read then in English and French, in Latin and Greek. Ben jamin Franklin reminded them that spiritual foun dations alone could assure the permanency of th nation they were creating. Said he: "Except th Lord build the house, they labor in vain that buil it! I firmly believe this; and I also believe that with out His concurring aid, we shall succeed in thi political building no better than the builders c Babel." The Church must again and again reiterat this warning. The history of centuries, the rise an fall of empires, substantiate the conviction tha only as the will and spirit of God are sought an

*John Donne, *Devotions Upon Emergent Occasions.*

plied in national life are enduring foundations l.

It is a secular understanding of life that lies nind the governmental philosophies of commu- m and facism. It lies behind all efforts to make State supreme in the control of human life, and place it beyond any criticism by its people. It arates man from what the Christian holds is his eritance and greatest claim to well-being—the t that he has worth with God and is God's child.

Worth of Man

From the Christian view, man is not merely an imal, differing from the brute creation by having somewhat superior brain. He is a child of God in e sense that he is a creation of God, is made in e image of God, and has value in the sight of d. He must, therefore, be treated with respect d given a chance to realize the divine possibilities thin him. This requires that men be given funda- ental freedoms—freedom of religion and con- ience, freedom of speech and press and assembly, edom of scientific inquiry and teaching, and edom of political opposition.

These freedoms Americans claim, thanks to the ct that the founding fathers of our nation were fluenced by Christian belief in the worth and gnity of man. They "brought forth on this con- nent a new nation conceived in liberty" because ey held that men are endowed by their Creator ith certain inalienable rights, rights not granted the government but by God, rights not at the ercy of any government, and rights, in fact, which overnment exists to defend on behalf of man. istory in our time has conclusively shown that e denial and the repudiation of this Christian ew of man leads inexorably to the denial of funda- ental freedoms. And why not, since the State self becomes the God to be served—an end in it- lf—rather than the means to assure that man ay attain his highest possibilities?

Rationalizations

Thus we are reminded again that democracy, the hild of Christianity, depends on a high estimate f persons. Lest we become complacent or careless bout imperfections in American democracy, re- lected in repeated denials of the basic principle of he worth of every man in the sight of God, the Church must be alert to expose such denials. The nost serious tensions in our nation today arise rom conflicts over the evaluation of man and his ights. There are those who, while claiming ad- erence to democratic ideals, negate their profes- ion by demonstrating that they do not believe all nen were created equal. They make certain reser- vations which have to do with the color of the skin, or national origin, or other differences which tend o set us apart. What persuasive philosophies are conjured up in defense of segregation and the crea- tion of ghettos! How adept we can become in ration- alizing a tendency to keep certain people "in their place"!

As an example of what is transpiring in our midst, there is more at stake in the historic decision of the Supreme Court than racial integration in our public schools. There is more at stake even than the maintenance of law and order, or the prestige of the Federal Government. There is at issue the whole Christian doctrine of man, a doctrine without which democracy cannot survive. Its continuing life depends on faith in the value of persons, and courage to trust persons with the grave affairs of state—without respect to color, race, religion, or national origin of the person.

Can we aspire once more to be able to say to the nations of the world, on behalf of our democracy,

> Give us your tired, your poor,
> Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free,
> The wretched refuse of your teeming shore.
> Send these, the homeless, the tempest-tossed to me:
> I lift my lamp beside the golden door.

without fear that when the disinherited and oppressed, the victims of totalitarian slavery have entered the golden door, they will have in reality entered a prison house of indignities, discriminations and hopelessness? Let us pray and hope for that day! But before it can come, we must learn again the lessons of the founding fathers who saw as a condition of true democracy the acceptance of every man on his own merits as a child of God.

Responsible Character

The church must create responsible character. Centuries ago, after the first experiment in democracy in Greece had failed, Plato came to the conclusion that democracy could never succeed. Because it depends so much on individual character, it will always and inevitably be corrupted by human greed and pride. He was at least correct in assuming that democracy gives individuals so much freedom that it is always in danger from the bad use of the freedoms it grants. Certainly without the restraint of high moral character, democracy gave the Greeks more freedom than they could manage. Yet without such trust in the individual, democracy cannot exist.

Democracy involves the transferring of authority from external controls, such as are imposed by totalitarian governments, to internal controls. How easy it is for those endowed with such freedom to use it for selfish and dangerous ends which threaten the spiritual citadel of democracy. Needless to say, a great population must be controlled. No sentimentality should blind us to that realistic fact. If there is to be order and not chaos, discipline and not anarchy, people must somehow be controlled. There are two ways of doing this—coercion from without, or voluntary, responsible public-spirited character from within. Dictatorships stake their very existence on the first. A democracy remains a democracy only so long as its major controls reside within the character of citizens who exercise voluntary, self-imposed and responsible discipline.

In any nation, the more we have of the one, the less we have of the other. If we have increasing coercion, as is sadly true in America today, we may be sure of the fact that responsible personal character is failing. We cannot go on neglecting

(Continued on page 16)

Expanding Awareness of the Universe Demands Intelligent Faith

Man's Fourth Adjustment

John W. Meister

What is man that thou art mindful of him?
Psalm 8:4.

MANY centuries ago a Jewish boy of the name of David looked at the stars in the sky and raised a question: "When I look at thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars which thou has established; what is man?" That is to say, what is this puny creature in comparison with such magnitude? How can man matter in a universe of stars?

From the dawn of civilization until now men who have found fascination in the stars have raised this same question. As we would expect, there have been as many different kinds of answers as there have been different kinds of people asking the question. Whatever else we can say about these answers we can agree on this: people with a firm faith in God have never felt seriously threatened by the stars. The answer which came to David has stirred the soul of many of us: "Thou hast made him little lower than God, and dost crown him with glory and honor."

We Christians have taken over this Jewish insight as to the worth of the human race and we add to it our Lord's insight that *every man* counts as an individual before God. We recall the words of Jesus, "Are not five sparrows sold for two pennies? And not one of them is forgotten before God. . . . Fear not; you are of more value than many sparrows." Armed with this faith we are able to live securely amid a universe of stars. Dr. Harry Emerson Fosdick spoke for all of us when he said,

> The thinker is of nobler worth than any external thing he can think about; the seer is more wonderful than all he sees; . . . No star ever knew that it was even being gazed upon. No star ever felt God's hand upon it, or was moved by gratitude for its creation, preservation, and all the blessings of this life. As an astronomer watches the unconscious heavens, does not God know, as we do, that the man, with his powers of vision, intellect, volition, and character, is far more marvelous than all the stars he sees?*

It seems to me, however, that our traditional security amid the stars has been profoundly shaken during the past few months. Apart from all the military and this-earthly implications of recent explorations into space there have also been certain psychological and theological implications. We n suffer from what we might call "a sense of spat insecurity." It is not that we seriously expect invasion by men from Mars or that we really an cipate earth-men will in the near future be roami comfortably through the outer reaches of space.

What does really and deeply disturb us in t contemporary space talk is the growing suspici that we may not be alone—that *Homo sapiens* m not be a unique biological species—that life in h man, subhuman or even superhuman form m exist among the stars.

This possibility contains very real theological i plications. The mind of every serious-minded Chri tian must be somehow teased with the questio What would happen to the *authority* of the revel tion of God in Jesus if it turns out that life as man fested in human beings on earth is not the highe form of life? Our Christian faith is almost con pletely earth-oriented: "God so loved the *wor* that he gave his only begotten son . . ." What ha pens to this conviction when we discover that t entire solar system—to say nothing of the earth- is only a speck on the edge of one of a million Milk Ways? Can we find any basis for a sense of spiritu self-importance or any solid basis for our Christia faith if it should be proved that God has develope superior forms of life elsewhere?

This, to me at least, is a real question and p tentially a real threat to our traditional Christia position. Let me suggest, therefore, at least a tenta tive path for theological exploration in this strang new day of spatial science.

Life Elsewhere?

Let me begin with this proposition: For pu poses of theology we ought to accept the possibilit that life does exist in other places in the universe.

I am not saying that life does exist elsewhere bu that we ought to accept the *possibility* it exist elsewhere. The wisdom here is to begin with th most difficult situation. If our Christian theolog

*Harry Emerson Fosdick, *The Meaning of Prayer* (New York: Association Press, 1949). Used by permission.

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survive in the most difficult situation we can pect it to survive in the less difficult or in-between tuations.

Again, I am not saying that it is probable life lewhere exists in a form identical with the human m of earth. The life-thrust or the life-power is in ence the same whether it be manifested in a one-lled amoeba, a four-legged dog or a highly intel-ent man. It is only the development, the pression, the manifestation of the life-force which ries. Since—simple as they are by comparison—two snowflakes have been found which are com-tely alike we can reasonably assume, it seems to e, that manifestations of life in other galaxies will obably be infinitely varied. This assumption ves the way open both for life-forms "lower" an earth-human and for life-forms "higher" than rth-human.

Against this background, then, I suggest that we ght to accept the possibility that life does exist other places in the universe. This would seem to a real possibility scientifically. Harlow Shapley, e Harvard astronomer and one time president of e American Association for the Advancement of ience, suggests this as a real possibility for at ast these reasons: (1) the discovery that there are her "suns" almost certainly means that in some her places the conditions of heat and light exist hich are conducive to life; and (2) the expanding ature of the entire system of galaxies seems to stify the conclusion that millions of planetary stems such as our solar system must exist—with milar kinds of chemistry and physics—thus of-ring the places for life to survive.

For theological purposes we can either accept the ther-existence of life as a possibility or declare it o be an impossibility. At the present moment the nly reason for insisting it is an impossibility is an tterly insensible one: that it is "unacceptable to he Christian faith." Far better, it seems to me, to ccept the possibility that life exists elsewhere and hen proceed to make the necessary adjustments pward in our thinking.

This is what Shapley calls "man's fourth ad-ustment." The first adjustment in man's thinking bout himself in relation to the material world ame in some prehistoric moment when some prim-tive thinker realized that the center of the physi-al universe was not himself but the earth on which he walked. The second came in the sixteenth cen-tury when Copernicus discovered that the earth is not the center but that the earth and the other eight planets in our system rotate about the sun. Theologians and Christians following their lead were slow to accept this adjustment but when they did they went too far: they assumed that *all* heav-enly bodies rotate about our sun. The third adjust-ment has come in the past thirty to forty years when we have learned that the heavens are com-prised of countless systems of galaxies, such as our own Milky Way, and that our solar system—so far from being the "center" of the universe—is only a speck on the edge of the Milky Way. The fourth adjustment will come with the acceptance of the possibility life exists elsewhere.

Our concern this morning is with the theological implications of this fourth adjustment. I see two. The first is this: to limit the *pretensions* of our Christian faith.

If life exists elsewhere in "lower" forms than our earth-human form our Christian message can offer no more redeeming message to those forms than it now offers to lower forms of life on earth. We do not, for example, pretend to preach the gospel to dogs or try to redeem snakes or attempt to establish the kingdom among the lions and tigers of Africa. There is something almost blasphemous in the sound of the suggestion. The gospel is God's Word to man. It is a divine-*human* affair. In Jesus God became flesh—*human* flesh. Yet there is a divine plan of redemption for the natural animal world as is plainly hinted at in the prophetic hope that the day will come when the lion and the lamb will lie down together. It is only that the gospel *per se* is not directly concerned with this redemption of the animal kingdom.

On the other hand, if life exists elsewhere in "higher" forms than our earth-human form our Christian message can scarcely pretend to be able to offer the saving Word. We could no more hope to redeem life in super-human creatures in some far away galaxy than the most intelligent dog or horse or chimpanzee could hope to redeem the life that is in us. To them—if they have the power to think about it—we are "super-dog" or "super-horse" or "super-chimpanzee." They may minister to us and even enrich our lives, but they cannot speak the *saving* Word.

One theological implication, then, in man's fourth adjustment is to realize that our earth-revealed and human-incarnated gospel will be able to speak the redeeming word elsewhere only if that other life corresponds with earth-human life. It that far limits the pretensions of our Christian faith.

Enlarges Our Idea of God

The other implication which I presently see is this: it enlarges our conception of God. The most universal and persistent theological effort is to fashion God in our own image. Since the human form of life is the highest form of life we have known we picture God in human terms—not that we picture him with a human body but we do use such terms as "personality," "mind" and "will." This is the best language we can use to describe our conception of God because it is the highest language we know—in that sense, it is the only language fit for the purpose. But the realization that life may exist in physical forms "higher" than man, more fully developed than man, compels us to enlarge our conception of God.

I think I can say this better in terms of an analogy. In the experience of sight, we can see light waves which vary in length between about 385 millimicrons and 760 millimicrons. This is what we call the spectrum ranging in color from violet to red. But we know that light rays exist which are shorter and longer than that range and which we do not see. Does that fact in any sense limit the validity of what we do see? The fact, for example, that we

know there are ultraviolet or infrared rays does not in any way change the fact that there are and we do see violet and red rays.

Our experience in hearing is similar. Most of us can hear sound vibrations as low as fifty or sixty cycles and as frequent as twenty or twenty-two thousand. But we know that sound waves can vibrate more and less frequently. Does that fact in any sense limit the validity of what we do hear?

So far from that, what we can see and what we can hear enlarges our comprehension of light waves we cannot see and of sound waves we cannot hear. The same physical laws which apply to those waves of light and sound to which our eyes and ears respond also apply to those waves to which we cannot respond. But the fact that we can respond to some of them increases our appreciation of the rest.

Here is a parable it seems to me. The revelation of God which we are given in Jesus of Nazareth is both limited truth and final truth. It is limited as we are limited. It is all the personal truth about God that we are able to understand. Just as the colors between red and violet are the only colors we can see, so is the personal truth about God which is revealed in Jesus the most personal truth about God we are able to understand. It is, to put it simply, all we need to know for this life here and now.

But the revelation of God which is given in Jesus of Nazareth is also final truth. That is, it holds for all life-forms whether we are able to enter into those life-forms or not. Jesus said, "I am the Truth." Wherever we find Truth and in whatever form—even if it be in some superhuman form on some far away planet—it is still the spirit of the living Christ which has spoken to us in Jesus of Nazareth. Truth does not depend upon our experience of it to become true—it only depends upon our experience of it to become true for us.

The possibility of the existence of life elsewhere and in higher forms certainly implies that we seek to grow into a greater conception of God. We can be quite certain that the days and years ahead will unfold many new discoveries about the universe in which we live. We can accept these new discoveries in one of three ways: We can pretend they do not exist; we can be unsettled by the strange; we can confront the new with whatever truth we do have knowing that if we humbly follow him the spirit of God will lead us into whatever truth we need. This is the way of intelligent faith.

Church and Democracy

(Continued from page 13)

the building of superior character from which personal and public integrity flow, and remain a free people in a free land. The inner disciplines of character must be cultivated.

The future of democracy hinges, to a great degree, upon whether or not we are able to produce a generation of young men and women whose al giance to God and reverence for God will undergi their freedom, determining with what attitude th handle freedom. Freedom is an invitation to d aster unless it is sternly disciplined within by cha acter of superior stature. We have been living f some time now on our spiritual capital, spendi beyond our income, depleting character of its gre disciplines and directives. Either we replenish o spiritual capital as responsible citizens, concern for the future well-being of the nation and mankin or we shall leave our children even fewer spiritu resources and motivations with which to susta their freedom.

Surely it is here, in the creation of Christia character, that the church does its never-endi work. The church is to turn men's hearts ar thoughts and wills towards God, and enable them t see their life and their institutions in the light God. To this task of evangelism and Christia training the church is called; for this task it especially equipped. It is a task which no othe organization is discharging or can discharge. Th church is an agency, under God and through Chris for the making and remaking of character. I preaches a gospel of spiritual and moral regenera tion.

"Where the spirit of the Lord is" there is bein created by that spirit a socially responsible perso who will use his freedom for the greatest good o all. He will refuse to use his freedom "as a pretex for evil"; but will live a disciplined, moral life "a a servant of God." Thus Christianity at its bes fits men and women for a free society. Living in th spirit of Christ, man learns that he has been mad free to live as he ought to live—as a child of God To bring such light to life is the opportunity tha confronts the church today in the day of peril fo democracy.

Prayers for Pastors

ETERNAL God, grant me wisdom that I may receive thy truth; grant me courage that I may be enabled to distinguish between thy truth and the "tradition of the elders"; grant me humility that I may be enabled to distinguish between thy truth and my defense of my own position; grant me thy grace that I may be steady in commitment to thy truth alone. In Jesus' name. *Amen.*

•

FATHER in heaven, save me from the kind of comparing of myself with others that makes me dissatisfied with the task thou hast given to me. May I recognize in thy giving of it the marks of its eternal importance.

Save me from the kind of pleasure with past successes that prevents my being alert and in touch with the ever-changing present. *Amen.—Donald L. Collins, Community Church of God, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.*

The Hitch-Hiker

By A. W. Beasley

"Help, Lord!" Ps. 12:1.

THE hitch-hiker is a familiar figure on the high-. way, thumbing his way from city to city, from ıte to state. The Christian Traveler is like this ch-hiker in this respect: he wants to get some-ıere, and if he does, he must catch a ride! He es not have his own transportation!

If the Bible were a newspaper, the Psalms might described as the "Help Wanted Section"! There e ever-recurring cry of anguish is "save me," "de-er me," "redeem me," "give refuge and strength." ıese are the characteristic prayers of our faith, ıd give foundation to the judgment that the ıristian religion is a religion of deliverance.

Equally clear is it that the man who earnestly eks deliverance finds that he cannot save himself; cannot forgive his sins; he does not have within mself the wisdom and the courage and the power be delivered. He must get help from another! Who shall deliver me?" asked Paul, speaking for s fellow travelers of all ages.

Let us be honest enough to confess that we often k for help when we should not ask. The school-ys who clutter up traffic and endanger their lives the end of the school day are trying to get a de when walking would be better. In many areas life man can help himself. No small portion of ır failures is due to the fact that we are not doing l that we could do. We may well be skeptical out God doing for us that which we can and ght to do for ourselves.

Too, there are areas of our life and its needs in hich others could help us, if they had a heart r it. Man's neglect of his fellows is a grave failing ıat causes much suffering and deprivation.

Vast Areas of Need

But when all is said that may be truthfully said out these matters, there yet remain vast areas here man cannot help himself, nor can his fellow man bring any real deliverance. Take the matter of *the inevitables*, for instance. How man resists the encroachments of the years, the terrible tyranny of the clock and calendar! How he squanders his time and his money to camouflage his wrinkles and waistline! But the moving finger continues to write! Or consider another inevitable, death. Man prefers to speak of this fact only by circumlocution. We say, "He passed on," "He departed," "He left us" rather than "He died." And the mortuary art is wondrously perfected, in answer to man's desire to see his fellows only as they looked when alive. But, death is a fact that cannot be voided, and if man finds any real comfort, for this inescapable, it will not be from himself and only feebly from his fellows.

Then there are *the unpredictables*—those sudden troubles and unexpected tragedies that make the world fall in about one's ears. These hurts are too deep for the wisdom of man, and too heavy for the strength of friends. Help must be had from Another.

Or consider the *spiritual longings* that periodically well up in the soul. The Psalmist voiced the prayer of millions who in consciousness of sin have cried out, "Create within me a clean heart and renew a right spirit within me." Man can wash the dirt from his hands, and friends may provide a new suit of clothes, but who can forgive sin but God? Where may man find those moral undergirdings to discipline an unruly nature, and let him walk in full integrity? He must find help outside of himself and of others if he is to resist the terrific pressures of his creatureliness.

Point of Intent

When an observer thought over these matters, he began to study the methods and techniques of the ubiquitous hitch-hiker who is skilled in catching a ride with another. There came to mind at once that intent was an important factor. *The hitch-hiker wants to get somewhere.* Otherwise, he would not be on the highway. He would be sitting in an easy chair at home. The man who finds help from God must be in earnest. It is easier for a good resolution to get into the "top of the head" than into "the bottom of the heart." "Seek and ye shall find." Deliverance will never come to the man who does not want to be delivered! Intent is the crucial factor in all creative change.

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William Law's writings concerning the living of a devout life still make a shocking impact upon the reader. The point at which he cuts to the quick is the point of intent. Man falls far short of his resolutions and professions of high principles because deep down in his heart he has no intention of following them, nor does he want them to prevail!

> "Here, therefore," he said, "let us judge ourselves sincerely; let us not vainly content ourselves with the common disorders of our lives, the vanity of our expenses, the folly of our diversions, the pride of our habits, the idleness of our lives, the wasting of our time—let us be assured that these disorders of our common life are owing to this, that we have not so much Christianity as to intend to please God in all the actions of our life."[1]

If these words are discounted because they come out of a day so different from our noisy,fear-driven and body-driven time, contemplate the earnest insistence of a modern saint. "Each of us," says Thomas Kelly, "can live such a life of amazing power and peace and serenity . . . on one condition —that is, *if we really want to*."[2] The decisive question is, then, "*wouldest* thou be made whole?" The intent, the intent! This may be the exposed point where the professed seeker suffers the fatal touch!

The hitch-hiker has found the starting point of every worthful pilgrimage—he really wants to get somewhere! Having firmly established his intentions, the hitch-hiker makes a start! He does not expect someone to drive up to his house and invite him! He does for himself that which he can do—he arises and makes his way to the open road!

Then there was another factor which the observer noted. *The hitch-hiker knows at least the direction he wants to travel.* He may not know the mathematical markings of all the highways, nor the many secondary roads along the way, but he does know whether it is north or south, east or west that he wants to go. The Christian Traveler knows that his general direction is Christ who said, "I am the Way."

Crucial Actions

Now, there are two other actions of this hitch-hiker that are very crucial. They point up the most common failures of men who seek deliverance and salvation, that they may know the fullness and liberty of the children of God. The next suggestive characteristic of the hitch-hiker is that *he is willing to travel light.* He knows that he has little chance of getting picked up if he is loaded down with suitcases. So—he travels light! The Christian Traveler, too, learns this lesson, or he does not grow deeply into the richness of character. Many people would be willing to give wholehearted dedication to the good life if they could relieve their minds of the allurements of things! The heart tells a sensitive man that the Christian virtues and ideals are worth possessing. Deep down, he desires them. But he wants some other things too. He wants a clean life, a life of peace and of spiritual power; but h wants to live in a certain kind of house and ride a certain kind of car; he wants to be popular an enjoy a diversified social life. He wants to be "on of the boys," to participate in all the activities the prominent. He wants the marks of a Christia but he would like to take his old habits along. H wants the thrill of Christian adventure and the glo of selfless sacrifices, but must he leave his cre turely comforts? "I want all this and heaven, too And it dismays him to face the terrible choic which so often must be made. His will refuses th beseechings of his heart, and he wonders why h did not catch a ride with God!

Our day is manifesting an extraordinary intere in the lives of the saints. It is well; for the saint in the lineage of every man! Like a golden threa there runs through these stirring stories the eve recurring fact: these men and women were distres ingly careless of their worldly fortunes! They aske "What can the world do for me?" Their triumphan answer was, "Nothing that matters." We ask th same question, and too often our answer is, "Every thing!" Our daily pilgrimage is so weighed dow with the cares and deceits of this world that w plod our way on leaden feet, and the chariot God passes us by! Too much baggage! "Go to th hitch-hiker, and learn of him. He knows that h must travel light."

The Deepest Wisdom

Now let us note what is perhaps the deepest wis dom of the hitch-hiker. *He has the good sense t put himself at the place where he is most likely t catch a ride.* He does not take his stand on a sid street; he gets on a main highway. He knows wha position to take at the lights and at intersections He goes to the hotel parking lots, and examines th license plates to see where the cars would likel be going. He uses common sense that is availabl to the simplest of people.

Men and women who have attained unto spiritua excellence have found their sources of guidance an help in certain holy habits. It is almost startling t note the similarity of their actions. Protestants Catholics, Jews—all faiths, all races—have foun that there are certain places where they catch ride. Prayer is one. One hundred per cent of th great saints were great prayers. These choice char acters have loved the Bible, and read it with prayer ful lips, with alert minds and obedient wills. Thes people have chosen service as a regular channel fo the outward expression of their inward commital Without exception they would testify that in wor ship their devotion was watered of God.

In worship the soul draws near to God and Goo makes himself known and felt. Flagging spirits ar revived, weakness is turned into strength, bodil passions are calmed, selfishness gives way to selfless ness when the spirit of man is stilled in the presenc of Him who is altogether holy.

Archbishop William Temple, with penetrating in sight, said: "The social and political ills of th world can be solved only through worship." He goe

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[1]William Law, *A Serious Call to a Devout and Holy Life* (New York: E. P. Dutton & Co., 1951).

[2]Thomas Kelly, *A Testament of Devotion* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1941). Used by permission.

God Gives the Power to Become
What We Must Come to Be

The New Age and the New Man

By Burt E. Coody

MAN is living in a new world. Copernicus, Kepler, Galileo, Newton, Einstein, and others have given us a cosmic concept which is vastly different from the medieval earth-centered universe. Modern techniques, scientific advancement, and automation have transformed the world in which men live and work. The capitalism our fathers knew of the 19th century does not exist today. Soaring birth rates, the surging masses of the world, fluid populaces, suburbia, and the new dimension of the aged in society have thrust man into a new social world. Political upheavals and changes in a shrinking world have forced man into thinking in terms of world citizenship rather than in the older forms of provincialism and nationalism which ignored the ways men lived in other parts of the world. Space missiles and satellites have suddenly made space travel an imminent possibility and the universe is open to man in a fashion never experienced before. Depth psychology has brought man face to face with himself in a startlingly revealing and shocking manner. Here the awesome inner world of the self has hardly begun to be explored and understood. Biblical theology has confronted man with the "strange new world" of the Spirit at a depth of existence which has caused man to re-examine old beliefs and assumptions. It has exposed our shams, laid bare complacent and easy consciences, and has further clarified the basic issues of life.

This new world has caught man unprepared to live creatively in it. Scientific explorations have advanced faster than man has been able to adapt to its achievements. By scientific instruments and experimental conditioning science is attempting to develop a "new man" who can live and function successfully in the tremendous speeds, weird weightlessness, and timelessness of outer space. Farrell, in his simulated trip to the moon, is an example of the psychological conditioning which man needs in order to live in his new world. (No doubt Texans will be quick to explain that Texas is the only State in which a man can go to the moon and back and never leave the State!)

Shattered Ego

There is another serious indication that man has failed to live creatively in the emerging new world which is thrust upon him. In the past century, we are told, the major psychological problems with which Freud and his contemporaries dealt were those having to do with a central ego threatened or thwarted in its attempt to achieve rather well-defined psychological goals. But man today is experiencing a breakup and fragmentation of the ego itself, a loss of the sense of selfhood. This is marked by a feeling of cosmic estrangement, of loneliness and anxiety, of meaninglessness and emptiness. Many are the persons confessing a sense of futility and purposelessness in life. The world upheavals, the swiftly changing social, economic, political, cultural, and international changes have not found man keeping pace with these cataclysmic events. They have left man rootless and homeless, deeply anxious about life and its meaning and destiny.

This new world demands a new man to live creatively in it. Where are we to find the image or model of this new man? Science is trying to find such a new man by scientific experimentation and psychological conditioning. But even after it has succeeded, it will take more than scientific knowledge and know-how, more than *scientific man* to live creatively in the new age to which we have come. Colin Wilson's *The Outsider* is usually too preoccupied with his own neurotic struggles and anxieties to be the model for this new man. The fragmented individual in *The Lonely Crowd* is either too isolated or too much a part of its frustrations to be this new man. *The Organization Man* has neither the desire, the ability, nor the courage to differ from the patterns of his organizationally structured existence. Modern man is now as unprepared to live in this new world environment as he is to live in the new world of outer space which is now opening up to him.

What is needed is a new adult, a new being, who will develop new patterns of thinking, new attitudes, and new ways of acting if man is to exist creatively in his new environment. Those who fail to do so

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will join *the outsider* in his isolation, or *the lonely crowd* in its frustrations, or the *organization man* in his false sense of security. Man is living in a new world. Old ways of thinking and acting are inadequate for these times. We must, said a leading news analyst recently, learn to think anew and to act anew. Our obsolescent educational system, he went on to say, is now inadequate to bear the load which is thrust upon it to guide us into these new patterns of thinking and new ways of acting in this new age. It is too much to ask that our educational system give us the new being which this new age demands.

Serious Questions

If science, society, and education cannot give us the new being which our times demand, this gives rise to two questions which we must seriously consider: (1) What is the image of this new being? What are the characteristics of this new man? (2) Where can we find the image or model on which to base our search and how shall we proceed in our quest?

Let us turn, now, to the first of these questions, "What are the characteristics of the new being required of man in order to live creatively in this new age?" This new world and new age to which we have come have given us new frontiers; the new man must be a man of *vision* to match it. Our new environment has given us new problems; the new man must devise *new techniques* and discover a *deeper wisdom* and *courage* to face them constructively. It has given us a new and different national and international social structure; the new man must be a person of *clearer insights* into this interpersonal dimension and must receive the *power of love* in order to make it creative instead of hostile and self-defeating. It has given us a nuclear power beyond imagination; the new man must have a conception of man, a moral ethic, and a spirit of *love and brotherhood* which will turn this power toward the making of a still newer and better world.

Our second question is much more difficult, for it asks the question of the source and means to such a new man as pictured here. To envision such a new being requires that we have a new conception, a new image of man. It requires that we have a new and more adequate image of adulthood, of maturity, and of what constitutes genuine and creative success in life. However much modern secular images of man may enrich the Christian image of man they of themselves fall short of giving us the type of new man which our revolutionary age requires. At a recent National Convention of the Religious Education Association it set for itself the serious study and assessment of the "Images of Man in Current Culture."[1] In an address in which he examined the "Secular Images of Man in Contemporary Literature," Dr. Robert E. Fitch labelled the secular images as those of complacency, despair, and defiance.

His "complacent man" may well be illustrated by Whyte's *Organization Man*, well entrenched in his suburbia, surrounded with the solid comforts of life, and comparatively unruffled in his daily existence.

An "instance of the drama of despair," says Fitch, is depicted in the play, *Waiting for Godot*. Here the principal characters spend their time in futile waiting for God who promises fulfillment but whose coming is never realized. "So they live," says Fitch, "in hope for the appearance of Godot—or God, if you will—but we get the impression that the hope must be forever unrealized."[2]

"Defiant man," Fitch went on to say, may be be characterized by Tennessee Williams' "great drama of defiance," *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof*. In his analysis of the play he said,

> The one irreducible value is life, which you must cling to as you can and use for the pursuit of pleasure and power. The specific ends of life are sex and money. The great passions are lust and rapacity. . . . It is not a tragedy because it has not the dignity of a tragedy. The man who plays his role in it has on himself the marks of a total depravity. And as for the ultimate and irreducible value, life, that in the end is also a lie.[3]

Of the many evaluations of man in his modern predicament perhaps none have penetrated with deeper insight than John C. Cooper in his four lines entitled "Soul Searching":

> A soldier with no zest for fighting,
> A poet with no zeal for writing,
> An architect without a plan:
> The prototype of modern man.[4]

Defiant man has "no zest for fighting," for he is fighting for a "lie." Yet enmeshed in his hostilities he cannot escape his neurotic fighting. The man of despair has "no zeal for writing," and yet the presses are grinding out a stream of his endless lament as he sings his song of despair. Complacent man has a vague image of his *house of security*. In it are the rooms of the organization, the vocation, the job, the family room, the living room of social status and entertainment, the den for comfort, relaxation, sports, the bedroom for sleep and sexual gratification. The foundation for the whole structure is money and social status provided by being a member of the "in-group." When these are removed the whole structure falls, and he is plunged either into despair or defiance.

Where, then, is to be found the image of the new mature being who will live creatively in our new age? Where is the model for this new adult of vision, of wisdom and courage, of creative love and brotherhood who can live on the frontiers of this new world, who can handle with a deep sense of moral stewardship its new techniques and power, who can live in the new political and social dimensions with love and genuine brotherhood? The model for this new being is provided in the Judao-Christian tradition culminating in the Christian image of man. More specifically, it is found in the Messiah, the Christ, who is at once God's revelation to us of the persons we are to be and the

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[1]Chicago, Illinois, November 24-26, 1957.

[2]*Religious Education*, March-April, 1958.
[3]*Ibid.*
[4]*The Christian Century*, January 1, 1958.

Why Was I Born?

By Andrew B. Smither

T THE top of a May 1953 *Ladies Home Journal* article were the words: "How would *you* swer if a little girl asked 'Why was I born?' " It a good question. How would you answer it? I ed one aged lady why she was born and she said, couldn't help myself!" And Jack Benny in the *urnal* article said, "What am I doing here on th? Trying to figure out why I was born!" ither of which would help a little child groping the dark. The sad fact is that many never get t of the dark.

One of the strangest novels, *The Castle*, by Franz fka, a Czechoslovakian Jew who died in 1924, ls of a man who is called to a distant town to rk as a surveyor. When he arrives he asks the tives how to reach the castle of the wn which is on top of the highest hill. The na- es are horrified at the question, and flee in terror. e tries desperately throughout the novel, in one warted effort after another, to make his way up the castle to see the lord and receive his instruc- ns. In the end the man dies, not only not having ached the castle, but not even having learned hat it was that he was supposed to do.

As one little boy put it, who was crying because didn't have a birth certificate he was supposed bring to school and who had lost the note his other had given him: "I've lost my excuse for ing born!" Multitudes have lost their "excuse for ing born."

According to a friend of Kafka, Kafka is trying his novel to make one truth clear, that man can- t climb to God. If he is to know God, and hence s reason for living, God must come to him. We ay give our very lives to know God, but in our wn wisdom and strength, we cannot reach "The astle." In fact, we cannot even know what it is hat we are supposed to do—unless God comes to s and tells us.

In the first chapter of Genesis we read, "God id, 'Let us make man in our image . . . to have ominion over all the earth.' So he created man in the image of God, male and female he created them. And God blessed them, and God said to them, 'Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it.' "

Before we can find ourselves, and the reason for ourselves, we must meet God—not some sentimental imagining of God, but that God who out of the fullness of his sociability, his love, willed us into existence to keep him company. The circumstances of many a birth are far from ideal, or even respectable, but when a child is born it can still be said that God willed that child's existence in a mysteriously wonderful sense. And every child deserves to know that God wanted him born even if nobody else did!

We are here because God placed us here, using our parents as his instruments. We are creatures of God, born to share his creative power and his freedom and like him, too, in that we are born for human as well as divine communion. "Male and female" is already a little community. We are born with freedom to create, to participate in God's creativity—as makers of mud-pies, play houses, real homes, as creative musicians, inventors, writers, preachers, mothers!

In Genesis we soon learn, too, that we are born to obey God, and on this fact hangs life's great complications. Abraham appears in Genesis. And why was he born? To be the pioneer in obeying God by faith. By faith Abraham left all that corresponds to our hot and cold running water, the General Electric garbage disposal units, and other modern conveniences, "for he looked forward to a city whose builder is God." Like Abraham, we, too, are born to be pioneers, adventuring by faith into a new world with new customs that accord with the city of God, even if it demands a sacrifice in our standard of living.

Still in Genesis we meet Joseph and through his story we can see that we are born to be stripped of our vanity and selfishness through hardship and suffering; to learn that though life often seems evil, God means it for our good and that he can bring us to a good end; to learn that we are born to forgive.

When Joseph's brothers saw that their father was dead, they said, "It may be that Joseph will hate us and pay us back for all the evil which we did to him." So they sent a message to Joseph saying,

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"Your father gave this command before he died, 'Say to Joseph, forgive, I pray you, the transgression of your brothers and their sin, because they did evil to you.' And now, we pray you, forgive the transgression of the servants of the God of your father." Joseph wept when they spoke to him. His brothers also came and fell down before him, and said, "Behold, we are your servants." But Joseph said to them, "Fear not for am I in the place of God? As for you, you meant evil against me; but God meant it for good. . . . So do not fear; I will provide for you and your little ones." Thus he reassured them and comforted them—his enemies! In Genesis! We are born to know a big God before whom our grudges vanish!

In Exodus we meet Moses. Why was he born? To risk his neck for an ungrateful people; to get all stirred up in the social issues of his day, all hot and bothered about its injustices; to be an unpopular reformer; born to live in the turmoil of problems and conflict and strife—and in a day with no sleeping pills! Born to speak for God to Pharoah—"Let my people go." Born to set at liberty those who were oppressed. And that is why we were born! Read the story of Father Huddleston, an Anglican priest whose life is dedicated to smashing segregation in South Africa where it is worse than in Alabama. Here is a man who knows he is born to be a creative worker with his creator in bringing justice to the world.

Moses also brought the people of Israel into covenant relation with God—that's why both Moses and Israel were born. And we, too. We are "not good if detached" from God and we are called, born to bring others into this covenant relation through membership in the church.

And there was Job. Why was he born? In painful testing, in being bereft of family, fortune, health, to discover again the God Abraham knew, before whom we do not justify ourselves. Job, like us, justified himself in opposition to God. But God does not recognize such justification, and God does not bother to justify himself by man's standards of what is just either. By Job's standard God fell far short at first—and Job is every man! We weigh God in our little scales and find he does not measure up! What a God, to allow such a disaster to befall me! So we turn atheist—in inner bitterness if not in outer profanity.

Fellowship in Disbelief

A man once told Dr. Fosdick he was an atheist. Dr. Fosdick said, "Well, now, will you describe for me the God you don't believe in?" The man took an hour at it. After which Dr. Fosdick said, "Well, my friend, you say you are an atheist. *I* am an atheist, too. I do not believe in *that* God either!"

And God is an atheist, too. He does not believe in the God of our little ideas of him. Job finally came to a transforming vision of a "God beyond God," a God beyond his ideas, his human measurements. And this vision of a big God was all the answer Job ever got to his insistent questions about why the righteousness, his virtue; he saw what Jesus declared, that none is righteous but God; but that God is a great God and a loving God whom shall see face to face at the last. Job is one of greatest books in all the world. We are born, found, to live by faith in God, to know that we saved by faith, not by our virtues, or by explanations, but by God's grace, by the God who will let us go. Job at last became a witness to this God. We are born for this vision which alone place us rightly in the universe. Man is born thi ing for infinity, and blessed are those who thirst infinity, as Job did, for they shall be satisfied, Job was. This is why worship is the highest of man! Without this vision we live without purp and die without hope!

Why was Jesus born? He tells us in almost ev act and breath—all he has to give us, tell us, co mand us to do is why we were born. We were b to live by his spirit which is the spirit of G Jesus was born to do God's will, not his own, to in his Father's house, to bear witness to the tru to heal, to help, to do good. Looking at the cross prayed, "Father, save me from this hour." Then changed it, "No," he said, "for this purpose I ha come to this hour"—to be crucified! We pray be spared every hard experience. Christ would h us pray that we might accept them to the glory God.

Witnessing and Helping

Why were we born? Jesus said, "Be perfect, God is perfect!" We are not born to be as good other sinners, but as good as God! To do that must be reborn. Paul says we are born afresh Christ and born to do those good deeds which G planned for us. As the Maori tribal chief in A tralia said to his people in persuading them not take up arms against British invaders, "Are we r here to do as Christ told us to do?"

You remember the crippled boy with the bask of apples he was going to sell, being knocked dow and his apples scattered all over the subway stati in New York as he was squirming through t turnstiles. The rough man who knocked him dow simply growled, "Serves you right, blocking traffi Stunned, the little boy began gathering himself a his apples together, and suddenly another m came up and immediately set about helping h until all the apples were back in his basket. A as the man started to go, the little crippled b thanked him, and as an after-thought, shout after the man, "Hey, mister, are you Jesus?" which the man smiled back at him and said, "N son, I am just one of his followers." We are born help the world pick up its spilled "apples," i broken bodies, joys.

What a difference it would make in our comi to church, and in the regularity of our coming, we remembered we were born to know God and grow up in Christ. If we came for that reason, would *not* come to hear sermons simply to please u to answer our questions, to deal with our person problems. That is why Job went to church at firs to listen for what he felt he needed. But rememb that God did not answer Job's questions at a Yet, when Job had a vision of God, all his questio

ed into insignificance. God wants to give us ethingfar better than answers to our questions e wants to give us himself!

nd once we have known God in the Bible, we find answers to our question about why we were n literally everywhere—in every newspaper and gazine, in every great biography.

n the March 17, 1955 issue of *Presbyterian Life*, re was an article on Dietrich Bonhoeffer, the man Christian who was hanged by Hitler for ason. He was willing to work for the defeat of own country, to commit treason, the highest ne of any nation, that Christian civilization ght endure. I cannot endorse his joining a plot assassinate Hitler, but we must all feel the chalge of his heroic daring to give his life. The article entitled, "Called to Live and to Die." We, too, born to live and to die for Christ.

Finally, there is the story of three young North reans, now refugees in the South, who are being dained to the Presbyterian ministry. They were ong the few who had escaped the communist aft for the Red invasion army by hiding for nths in holes in the ground or in caves in the untains.

After the ordination prayer and the solemn lay- on of hands, came "the charge to the new miners." A veteran pastor of more than seventy, who d suffered beatings and imprisonments by both panese and communists, and a hairbreadth escape, all taken in St. Paul stride, gave the charge. After a few words about the responsibilities of e ministry and the need of complete consecration, took the hand of each young man and with ars coursing down his own weather-beaten cheeks, allenged: "Faithful . . . unto . . . death!" "Faithl . . . unto . . . death!" "Faithful . . . unto . . . ath!"

That is why we were born—to be faithful unto ath, in the sure and certain hope of the resurrecon from the dead. For we were born to be with od forever.

The Hitch-Hiker

(Continued from page 18)

n to point out memorably five things which true orship does to a man:

It quickens the conscience by the holiness of God.
It feeds the mind with the truth of God.
It purges the imagination by the beauty of God.
It opens the heart to the love of God.
It leads the will to devote itself to the purpose of God.[3]

What a ministry! Let the man who is careless of worship consider! These beneficent bestowals do not come from reading the comics; you don't find them in the night clubs on Saturday night, nor in puttering around on Sunday in your lounging clothes. You just don't!

The seventy-third Psalm pictures the hitch-hiker. "My feet were almost gone," the writer said. He started to think about the hard time he was experiencing while others were having it fat and easy. Self-pity got the best of him and he cried out bitterly, "I have cleansed my heart in vain." Nothing to this thing of being religious! Then he tried to figure out the whole sorry scheme of things, and it was too much for him—until he went into the sanctuary. Then his mind and soul were illuminated! "So foolish was I and ignorant. I am continually with thee. Thou hast holden me by my right hand; thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and afterward receive me to glory. It is good for me to draw near to God." He caught his ride when he put himself in the place where he was likely to get a lift!

Go to the hitch-hiker, thou Traveler, and learn of him. He really wants to go somewhere. He knows the direction he desires to travel, and gives earnest of his intent by making a start. He is willing to travel light, and has the common sense to place himself where he is most likely to catch a ride.

[3] *Daily Readings From William Temple*, compiled by Hugh C. Warner (New York: Macmillan, 1950).

New Age, New Man

(Continued from page 20)

transforming power to become such new beings. The reality of the Incarnation confronts man with God in history where this image is clarified in man's clear vision of himself in his sin, and of God in Jesus Christ. In the life, the message, the healing ministry, and the sufferings and death of Jesus man sees the judgment of God upon all his self-images which are formed in complacency, despair, or defiance. In the light of these man sees the helplessness and hopelessness of his own struggles and the futility of trusting in his own self-images. But through the resurrection and the gift of the Spirit of God man is delivered from his own inadequate self. In the grace of God's forgiveness and acceptance, of his love and Spirit, man comes to be apprehended by that transforming power which in some mysterious manner makes this Christian image, this new being, a reality in the life of the man who places his faith and trust in Christ.

Christ is the origin of our being, the power of our becoming, and the goal of our life. In him man becomes a "new creation," a new being, rising above the mere "human point of view." In him man is reconciled to God, to himself, and to his fellow men, and is equipped for the quest of creative living in the new age.

Almighty God our Father, in thee all men live and move and have their being. There is no fleeing from thy presence nor escape from thy judgment upon our lives; even our estrangement and our sins are "before the face of the Lord." Help us to see the sin of self-trust, the futility of our efforts at self-redemption, and the emptiness of selfishness. Give us the clear vision of ourselves in our sin, of the revelation of thyself in Christ, and of the new being to which you call us in him. Help us to see Christ as the origin of our being, the power of our becoming, and the goal of our life. Amen.

The Confusion of Conflicting Deman
Is Overcome by Discipleshi

By What Authority?

By Frederick Pond Ferre

WE LIVE in a civilization which confronts us with competing claims for our allegiance. These strong demands sometimes reinforce one another, sometimes oppose one another. If we lived in a culture where all authorities mutually supported each other (as is the ideal of all so-called "totalitarian" states), then, perhaps, the question of whether "to accept" or "to reject" a given claim on our loyalty and obedience might never arise in our minds. But our modern western civilization is marked by the characteristic of encouraging—or, at the least, of tolerating—the existence of many possible alternative loyalties, even alternative *ultimate* loyalties. One of the consequences of living in a free society is the glorious, painful need for each one of us to ask the question: "By what authority?" Freedom of choice forces onto us responsibility for searching out the basis of authority of even our highest loyalties.

What are some of the claims for obedience which confront us? The nation insists on loyalty and control over our lives. By what authority?—by the authority of the sword and by the moral authority of civil order for the common good. Trade unions and business associations demand our loyalty. By what authority?—by the authority of common economic goals, of mutual need and support. The family asserts its demands on us. By what authority?—by the authority of natural function, economic and social needs, deep human affections.

We Must Ask

Christ, too, makes his claim of allegiance. This call of Christ often in fact seems to stand well down in the queue of demands on us—yet the church tells us that our loyalty to Christ is the supreme demand, before which all other loyalties, whether political or economic or social or natural or spiritual must take second place as relative and derivative.

As responsible persons, therefore, we must ask by what authority Christ's claim on us can surpass all others. And when we ask this question we ec a demand which was asked in his own day wh he came teaching "as one having authority," wh he came requiring that his authority be plac above all loyalties to family and friends, above loyalty even to the established claims of Moses a traditional high religion. In his day, as toda Christ was challenged by those who heard h claims to absolute loyalty and watched him a undermining hallowed tradition: "By what a thority?"

If we turn to the Bible hoping that it will answ this question for us in neat terms, we are due for disappointment. We must be frank: Christ evad the question when it is put to him by making h answer conditional on an impossible question whic he, in turn, asks his questioners. Jesus is not pr pared to allow this question of his authority descend merely to the level of another intellectu puzzle. He refuses to give any reasonable explan tion of why he expects to have his teaching an example accepted as supreme in human lives. Th chief priests, scribes, and elders of the people, ba fled by a trick question, were forced to retire: "W do not know." And he said to them, "Neither wi I tell you by what authority I do these things."

Empty Debate and Shallow Decision

Much as we who set a great store by reasone explanations and high-flying speculation may re gret it, the facts are that those who insisted o keeping the question of Christ's authority on th level of a rational puzzle never received an answe on their terms. Oh, yes, the debate went on: Chris claimed his Sonship of God as authority; the Phar isees rejected his evidence on the good Jewish lega grounds that he could produce no witnesses fo this amazing claim; Jesus offers "the Father wh sent me" as his witness; the Pharisees are uncon vinced—"Where is your Father?" they ask, look ing around for a witness of the kind that the required. But the pointlessness of this debate *is it very point!* If we are to receive an answer to th question that we as responsible people must ask "By what authority?" then we must take the issu to a different level.

But, looking again into the Gospels, we find tha if empty *debate* failed to establish Christ's au

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ity, so did unthinking, shallow *decision* to fol- him also fail. Thousands acclaimed him, we are , after stories spread of his wonderful healing er and of his astonishing ability to feed the rds. "And multitudes followed him, because saw the signs which he did on those who were ased"—so the sixth chapter of John's Gospel as. But how many remained even at the end of same chapter? A lighthearted readiness to cide for Christ" with no thought of the impli- ons of what loyalty to him must mean, what rnative loyalties must be subordinated, and all this must be so, afforded no firm basis for epting his authority. Christ's thoughtless fol- ers melted at the first signs of what commit- nt to Christ's absolute authority might mean. pretend that there is no need for thought about question "By what authority?" is to be unpre- ed for withstanding the punishment of real versity, the challenge of other conflicting claims one's supreme loyalty. It is an evasion of re- nsibility, a flight from God-given freedom.

No Neat Explanations

Then by what authority? We are left still search- for an answer. If neither uncommitted reason- nor thoughtless commitment can offer a basis Christ's authority, what can offer a true basis? Let me first warn that no answer to this question ll be fully capable of satisfying our minds alone. ne question of accepting or rejecting *ultimate* alty must, at its very core, be only imperfectly tionalizable. Even the decision to accept loyalty "reason" as our ultimate authority (if we so cide) is imperfectly rationalizable. Ultimate prin- ples admit of no "super-ultimate" neat explana- ns—or they would no longer be ultimate inciples. The Bible recognizes this fact of *opaque- ss* which the question of accepting ultimate au- orities raises before the mind. It speaks in ysterious, paradoxical terms of the forces in- lved in accepting or rejecting Christ's absolute aim. Jesus, we remember, is quoted as saying that no one can come to me unless it is granted him the Father." Paul later elaborates a doctrine of grace" to express the finally unexplainable nature the acceptance of ultimate authority; at other mes he expresses the rational opaqueness of hrist's claim to authority by speaking in terms of ne "elect" and the "foreknown."

> For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son. . . . And those whom he predestined he also called; and those whom he called he also justified; and those whom he justified he also glorified.

Goodness of God

Let us not misunderstand this doctrine as it so ften has been misunderstood. Paul's doctrine of lection is not the savage theory that God "pre- lestines" some of his freely created children to ternal torture. *That* is not the good news of the Christian faith! No, the doctrine of election is Paul's attempt to express the unexplainable na- ure of the fact that *some do in fact* make the ul- timate choice to accept Christ as the supreme authority in their lives and that this fact *cannot* be due to sheer arbitrary choice (or chance) alone. To reverse Paul's insight and say that "therefore" some must have been set apart for damnation from all eternity is to force the divine mystery of "grace" into a cruel human doctrine. And for what motive? In order to satisfy the craving of our small minds for the neatness and consistency of logic at the expense of the central message of the gospel itself—that of the goodness of a loving God whose grace must finally sweep in triumph over all creation!

Full Action of Mind and Will

Yet the role of "grace" (of rational opaqueness) in the choice for or against Christ's authority is only part of the Christian's answer to the question "By what authority?" The other side of the answer requires the full action of the mind and will of men. We are not excused from responsibility by the doctrine of grace. That is its paradox! Our full responsibility is kept intact, and the whole reply to the question of authority involves grace *and* will *and* thought. Christ's word is this: "If any man's will is to do his will [that is, the will of God as revealed by Christ's life and teaching] *he shall know* whether the teaching is from God or whether I am speaking on my own authority."

The implications of Christ's authority must be thought carefully through, the will to live the life of obedience to Jesus Christ must in all sincerity be present, the life according to the authority of Christ must be wholeheartedly entered in upon *and then,* Christ promises, *you shall know* on what authority these teachings have been offered and these acts accomplished. The life which Christ demands of us carries within it its own stamp of authority; once chosen, thanks to God's grace and the thoughtful exercise of our real responsibility, the authority he offers needs no longer to be questioned; in fact, an answer to the question such that it could calmly be debated on a theoretical level would be out of place.

Taste and See

Come, if you would find out on what authority I speak, and try! "Taste and see that the Lord is good." You will not be reasoned into accepting the authority of Christ over your life; you will not know his authority if you approach without the thoughtful choice made to try him at his word. But when you have cast your lot in with him as a faithful disciple, then there is no more need for questioning his credentials. The contradictory demands of this world may pull others away from their half-given loyalties to Christ, but when he asks you, as he did the twelve after the multitude had deserted, "Will you also go away?" may you reply, like Simon Peter, "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life; *and we have believed, and have come to know,* that you are the Holy One of God."

O God, give us the readiness born of deep concern and the guidance that comes from caring. Amen.

The Church Boss

By Romey P. Marshall

SOME time ago I was collecting material for a group of talks on little-known characters of the Bible and I ran across one who certainly deserves mention. J. B. Phillips, in his marvelous translation of the New Testament epistles, called *Letters to Young Churches,* translates John's words in his third letter thus: "I did write a letter to the Church, but Diotrephes who wants to be head of everything, does not recognize us! And it doesn't stop there, alas, for although he wants to be a leader he refuses the duty of welcoming the brothers himself, and stops those who would like to do so—he even excommunicates them!" [1]

No one who reads those words will fail to recognize the likeness; for Diotrephes is found in all churches under various names. Despite the fact that he was a thorn in the flesh to the Apostle John long years ago, he is not dead, for wherever there is a congregation there is Diotrephes in all his glory.

When I was a young minister I almost let him discourage me. I heard him talk about the preachers he had "run off." I listened to his pious chatter in the Sunday school class and watched the faces of those who knew him for what he was. I talked with long-suffering members who had borne the burden of his domination so long that they had given up hope of ever being able to throw off the yoke. They wanted to "chuck" him into the river, but they didn't dare. They squirmed under the lash of his tongue and were baffled by his subtle use of political chicanery to gain his own ends. They sometimes thought they had him cornered, and once or twice they got up a promising insurrection, with the aid of the minister. But it always fell flat, for Diotrephes was clever in his way, and when the big moment came they always found that, overnight, just enough of their support had deserted them to give the vote to the Boss.

The Cloak of Piety

Yes, Diotrephes was clever, with a subtle sort of devilishness that masqueraded under the cloak of piety. He was always the one to protest the "modern notions" of the pastor and to call for a return to "old time religion." Of course, there were many who were really concerned about that, and sometimes the young pastor needed reminding that his prayer meeting congregation was not really edified by his dissertation upon "J, E, and P," and the development of the idea of a tribal deity among the Hebrews at Mount Sinai. Indeed, he would have been exceedingly obtuse to fail to see the signs of revolt against "higher criticism" when a good lady, after listening to thirty minutes of ill-digested information about the theories of Higher Criticism, misunderstood the whole point and rushed out of the church crying, "He has taken away my Lord!"

I think the young man would have changed his style to a more intelligible and intelligent one after a few more experiences like that. But Brother Diotrephes couldn't wait. He didn't pray, as did some of the good souls, that the Lord would open His servant's eyes and let him see that he was not preparing a critical thesis but preaching to a group of unlearned farmers and farmers' wives, who, in the main, were far more concerned about practical religion than he was. No, Diotrephes didn't pray—he got to work. He buttonholed the stewards and buttered up the trustees, and these good, but ethically confused, men, after publicly complimenting the young preacher and asking for his return, made a solemn call on the District Superintendent and put in their bid for a more biddable man. They got him.

Now as I look back on that episode, I am all on the side of the protesting pilgrims. I would not want to have to subsist on the sort of mental mud pies that I was baking for those long-suffering people. But the point is that the poor people who suffered the most did not actually want it to happen that way. They wanted the foolish young man to stay, and they hoped with a Christian zeal that he would learn better sense and acquire more spiritual qualities. They were prepared to endure hardship like a good soldier of Jesus Christ while he was learning. Someone had to break in the young fellows, they said, and they were willing to be the ones. I really think that they would have done it, given tim and the grace of God. As it was, th pastor became somewhat embittered b the experience and lost what little r ligion he did have for a time, as h began to criticize the church to hin self, and to bolster up his own ego b trying to prove that the only thin wrong with his sermons was that the were over the heads of the people. (A if *that* were not crime enough!)

Yes, if Diotrephes hadn't stepped i for reasons of his own, which were no at all connected with the religiou teaching of the preacher, that youn man might have saved himself a fe years of fumbling around in a fo But Diotrephes wanted "to be head o everything" and he seized on ever pretext to show his single-handed au thority. I have forgotten his real nam but I know he must have been a linea descendent of a long line of church bosses who have plagued the gospel fo a full two thousand years.

Determined

Now the trouble with Diotrephes according to John, was that he was de termined to show his authority. Th incident mentioned in the Bible give a picture of his smallness of character He asserted his preeminence by deny ing the right of the Apostle John t visit the church which he had founded He made it a test case. He said to him self, "If I can pull this off, there won't be any doubt who's boss around here." And he did it. I can just see him as he rises to his feet in meeting and an nounces that the Council has just made a new ruling. "Whereas," he reads in solemn tones, "it has come to the at tention of the Official Board that cer tain Apostles are going about visiting the churches and getting free meals from the members, we have thought

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[1] J. B. Phillips, *Letters to Young Churches* (N. Y.: Macmillan, 1947). Used by permission.

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best to pass a rule that from now on they are not to be admitted to this church." Now, of course, he had proposed that rule while the rest of the boys were napping and had read it in such a low voice that nobody really understood what it was about. Any questions would have been answered by saying that it was aimed only at the mendicant brothers who came from no one knew where and whose itinerant peregrinations usually took them south for the winter and north for the summer.

But when the Rule was read to the congregation the emphasis was unmistakable. Suddenly they realized what had happened — Brother Diotrephes had pulled another fast one on the boys! And Father John, the Beloved Apostle, who, on his last visit, had gently reminded the Boss that he was really only small potatoes, was the one at which the blows were aimed. The Council had voted him out of the church that he had built. Of course, there was discussion and argument, but Diotrephes stood firm. "We must be democratic," he said. "We must follow the old Greek custom of letting the majority rule, and the majority has voted in the Council and that's that." In vain the other brothers protested that they had been either asleep or wool-gathering when it happened, but Diotrephes stood his ground. "Of course," he may have said, "if any of the brothers feel that I have been wrong in this, I will be glad to resign and take my yearly pledge of a hundred pieces of silver over to another church." That fixed them.

And so the Beloved Disciple had to write a sorrowful letter to his dear friend Gaius, a letter that was a masterpiece of the wisdom of serpents and the gentleness of doves. Note how he leads up to the point, "You are doing a fine faithful piece of work, dear friend, in looking after the brothers who come your way, especially as you have never seen them before. It is a fine thing to help them on their way—it shows that you realize the importance of what they are doing. They set out on this work, you know, for the sake of 'The Name,' and they accept no help from non-Christians. We ought to give such men a real welcome and prove that we too are cooperating with the Truth." [2]

Controlling the Votes

You see the direction of his thought? I am sure that Gaius did, and that he read on with a sense of shame—"I *did* write a letter to the church" (and I think that he means here that he had written a 'thank-you' note for past favors and an intimation of an approaching visit) "but Diotrephes, who wants to be head of everything, does not recognize us!"

"Yes, Gaius," said John, in effect, "your church boss won't let any of the Prophets and Apostles visit you, me included! He's going to be head of the Church, regardless, and he doesn't want any outside interference. He doesn't want to contribute to missions; he wants to keep all his money at home. He wants to have an independent church, not a unit in the Holy Catholic Church. He's all for democracy, as long as he can control the votes."

Diotrephes was not above using unfair tactics, even to slandering the Apostles. I presume that this came later, when the opposition got tough, and I can just hear him as he visits around in the membership, planting sly rumors.

One of the hazards of the ministry is that any pastor is at the mercy of every neurotic and unbalanced woman in the town. When that woman happens to be a female Diotrephes, then watch out! A distinguished minister, long out of the active pastorate, once told me that one reason he went into another field of religious work was that, as a young minister, he was almost ruined by a gossipy woman who accused him, without the slightest proof, of having been indiscreet in his relations with the women of his congregation. He was completely exonerated by an informal investigation, but the experience left its scar and he was never able to get over his fear of another such attack.

Tragic Error

A few years ago a beloved and respected pastor of a small church, who had given many years of service to the ministry and was almost ready to retire found himself in the clutches of Mrs. Diotrephes, who wanted a younger and more attractive preacher. After exhausting all her tactics in political maneuvering, she suddenly threw the bombshell she had been holding in reserve. And the next day the minister was arrested on charges of having contributed to the delinquency of two minor children. His immediate superior rushed into the breach, but instead of helping matters he took refuge in the comforting thought that the damage had been done, and no matter what was the merit of the case, the pastor's work would suffer. So, "for the sake of the church," the old man was deprived of his credentials and his career terminated without a church trial. When the courts found him not guilty and proved conclusively that the woman had made up the charges out of whole cloth, instead of receiving the persecuted man back into the ministry, it was decided that, "for the sake of the church," he should accept his fate and say nothing.

Mrs. Diotrephes had triumphed!

What makes them that way? I asked that question a long time ago, and I think I have found an answer. Look over the roll of church bosses, those who parade before the bishop at Annual Conference and present their petitions—often quite at variance with the vote of the official board. What sort of men are they?

For the most part, they are frustrated leaders, who, for one reason or another, have failed to find a place of authority in local politics or in s life, and who are forced to find outlet for their energies in running church. They are the ones who tell you why it can't be done. They remember all the failures of predecessors and few of their succes They know how to hold a caucus before Council Meeting and s everything without argument. T hold little bits of information aga the day when they will be nee Perhaps they are wealthy and own leases to the buildings which t brethren rent, perhaps they run a b and can either make or break a b ness venture. Almost always they a delight in showing their author even in the smallest matters, so if a good thing comes along and ceives a favorable vote, they will o block it just long enough to show t power. Then, when the original mot has been forgotten, they will prop the very same thing with an air great originality.

Yes, Diotrephes is a thorn in flesh, but, like Paul's burden, he see to defy any attempts at removal. T only thing we can do is pray for conversion or translation—the la being a somewhat dubious method getting rid of an adversary.

Nevertheless, I suppose that e John must have at some time thank God that He gave him Mr. Big, otherwise the Apostle might have be too comfortable. Maybe.

Pulpit Calendar

July 4—Independence Day.
July 6—6th Sunday after Pentecost.
July 13—7th Sunday after Pentecost.
July 20—8th Sunday after Pentecost.
July 27—9th Sunday after Pentecost.
Aug. 3—10th Sunday after Pentecost.
Aug. 6—The Transfiguration.
Aug. 10—11th Sunday after Pentecost.
Aug. 17—12th Sunday after Pentecost.
Aug. 24—13th Sunday after Pentecost.
Aug. 31—Festival of Christ the King. Labor Sunday.
Sept. 1—Labor Day.
Sept. 7—15th Sunday after Pentecost.
Sept. 14—16th Sunday after Pentecost.
Sept. 21—17th Sunday after Pentecost.
Sept. 28—18th Sunday after Pentecost.
Sept. 28-Oct. 5—Christian Education Week.

[2] *Ibid.*

PULPIT POST

(Continued from page 2)

e, is it? It is a tongue not under-
d in our churches. It does not
y. It needs an interpreter. Why
; the preacher an interpreter?
re you sure there is nothing wrong
a viewpoint which is (For Sooth!)
thered" by a plea for "simpler,
ner, easier, more 'popular' mate-
s"? Is that not a good description
ur Lord's style? The rub was that
made obvious truths plain *to the*
ple. The Crucifixion is proof of his
ctiveness. There was just no mis-
ing his meaning. How much your
rnal can do for the world by setting
taste among preachers for sermons
ch are *spoken* to *people!*

ROBERT JOHN VERSTEEG
Groveport Methodist Church
Groveport, Ohio.

ject Sermons

SIR: Having winced in embarrass-
nt for the ministers whose pulpit
gic was pictured in *Life* magazine
eral months ago, I found Miss Nie-
ır's excellent article most welcome.
t while her article furnished cogent
sons why object sermons should not
used, it seems to me that one of the
ongest objections to them was never
ted, although it may have been im-
cit.

Miss Niebuhr's rejection of object
mons rests upon the fact that the
ildren to whom they are generally
ected are not yet capable of grasp-
the analogies that are thus made.
it a further objection (and this ap-
es to those adults who like the tricks
much) is that even if the analogy
understood, the preacher has still
complished very little. Analogies
aking use of roses, colored water,
., can at best only put across a bare
oposition. It is possible that, for
der children and adults, the instan-
neous change from red to white in a
se might make memorable the propo-
ion that "Christ cleanses the heart."
it the burden of preaching is not to
esent the proposition, but to make it
istentially meaningful. It is easy to
t people to memorize propositions,
easy that the object sermon would
em to be a wholly unnecessary com-
ication. The problem comes in relat-
g the proposition to experience—in
owing *how* "Christ cleanses the
art"—and sleight of hand tricks can
ver do this because they have no
oint of contact with the life situations.
s Miss Niebuhr pointed out, stories
awn from life are much more likely
be relevant.

Thanks for a much-needed article.
ere's hoping that it puts an end to
erformances such as those pictured
Life.

MAYO YATES SMITH
First Presbyterian Church
Winamac, Indiana

SIR: Hulda Neibuhr's article on "object sermons" reminds me of the child who brought home from Sunday school the traditional Easter plant. Mother, reaching for the meaning, asked, "What did the teacher say when she gave it to you?" The child answered, "She said 'Don't drop it.' "

JOHN O. MELLIN
First Presbyterian Church
New York, N. Y.

Second Looks

SIR: I must confess a mystical experience in finding something I had written placed in print. It is both disturbing and good that the first line of the first "poem" is so abominable, looked at later and more objectively. "Dreadful" or "fearful" would have been so much better than "frighten'ly upsetting"! At any rate, finding that abomination was properly humbling.

HARVEY H. BATES, JR.
West Virginia Mountain Project
Presbyterian Church, U.S.A.

SIR: The Pulpit, April 1958, page 9, "the *first Isaiah* who saw his people languishing in the *Babylonian* captivity."

Some foresight for I Isaiah. Some oversight for the Editor!

RAYMOND A. HALL
Burlington, Vt.

and if tomorrow came suddenly today...

WHAT THEN?

Imagine yourself lifted right out of this picture...

Surely you would not want to be taken away from your wife and family without making certain that they would not be deprived of a home and the way of life that you had built. Naturally, no man would.

And that's what life insurance is for. At The Ministers Life & Casualty Union ministers and other full-time religious workers can be insured at preferred risk rates. Ministers Life actually sells a $6,000 policy at the same price as the usual $5,000 policy.

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Book Reviews

REACHING PEOPLE FROM THE PULPIT. *Dwight E. Stevenson and Charles F. Diehl. Harper and Brothers. $3.00.*

"WE cannot tell ourselves too often that the sermon is not the words spoken in the sanctuary. It is the message that gets through to the hearers." With painstaking detail, the authors press this point. Here is an intensely practical book on sermon delivery.

The value of the book comes from the disciplines it inspires. It is really a do-it-yourself manual on all aspects of sermon delivery, complete with rating sheets (voice, body, emotion) and devastating analyses of the causes and cures for a host of speech problems. The book isn't to be read in a sitting; it should be used as a manual, along with the rating sheets and a tape recorder. The authors even give detailed suggestions for organizing classes and workshops.

Through the rating sheets, the preacher can find his own kind of Trendix rating, if he can stand it. If he wants to improve and is willing to follow disciplined exercises, this book is the ticket. A good book to disturb your summer vacation and improve your winter preaching!

RABBINIC STORIES FOR CHRISTIAN MINISTERS AND TEACHERS. *William B. Silverman. Abingdon. $3.50.*

RATHER unusual, that a rabbi should gather an anthology of Jewish stories for the use of Christian ministers! Rabbi Silverman draws from the Midrash, the Babylonian Talmud (there is also a Palestinian Talmud), and the Hasidic rabbis. His introduction explains what these sources are, and gives us an insight into our common bonds with Judaism.

The brief stories and scriptural interpretations are classified under such headings as God, Man, Prayer, etc., and are fully indexed. If you like anthologies, this isn't bad, though many of the stories do not exactly cry for repetition. After so illuminating an introduction, one might wish that Rabbi Silverman had put more of himself into the chapters.

THE SERMON AND THE PROPERS, *Vols. 1 and 2. Fred H. Lindemann. Concordia Publishing House. $4.00 and $4.50.*

"WHEN God draws near to men and faithful men approach God, that is worship," writes Dr. Lindemann. While salvation depends on no system of forms, "the best interest both of the people and the preacher demands some orderly arrangement of subject matter." The sermon is part of the liturgy, and as such it should come out of the appointed Epistle or Gospel lesson for the particular day.

For those in liturgical churches, particularly Lutherans, these two volumes will be invaluable. For the rest of us, they may remind us how far we are from the historic purpose of preaching and how much we could use a disciplined plan in preparing to speak for God. Thus we might save ourselves (and most definitely our congregations!) from the habit of playing our favorite pulpit tune, and at last give our people the deep overtones of the faith.

Both volumes contain the same provocative 11 page Introduction of the church year, the liturgy, the purpose of worship. The remainder considers the liturgy for every Sunday of the church year, with helpful comments and explanations of the particular days and seasons. Sermons based on the Gospel and the Epistle are given for each Sunday. These are not the suave innocuous tidbits we have become numb to; they are scriptural in a detailed sort of way and are meant to feed the faithful who do not need to be persuaded by a popular appeal each Sunday. The "practical application of the day's main thought to the Lord's Supper," is one of the finest sections of each chapter.

This is solid stuff. A disciplined reading of the proper chapter every week would eventually have a solitary effect upon even the most nonliturgical among us.—*David B. Watermulder, First Presbyterian, Oak Park, Illinois.*

SO YOU WANT TO PREACH. *Frederick Keller Stamm. Abingdon. $2.00.*

IN this letter to young preachers, Dr. Stamm shares the wisdom of a lifetime in the pulpit. The ideas are friendly and folksy, designed to alienate no one. Two major stresses pervade the book: the first is a constant reminder of the limits of any preacher's effectiveness; the second is a clarion call to take seriously the task of being a dauntless evangel. Humility and hard work thus become the twin doctrines in an otherwise creedless essay.

Reading with Dr. Stamm is a pleasant experience, colored by the nostalgia of "pulpit princes," tiny seminaries and rural churches. One is strikingly reminded that a new era is upon us, requiring even greater efforts than are here indicated. And yet there is a similarity about the minister's task in every age, a fact of which Dr. Stamm compellingly reminds us.

The unfortunate title, too, suggests something of an era now outgrown. "Called" to preach, yes. But few of us have the patience to listen to one of his own will "wants" to preac *Lawrence L. Gruman, First Con gational, Fairport, New York.*

THE MEANING OF CHRIST. *By Ro Clyde Johnson. Westminster P $1.00.*

HERE is a fine introduction to core of Christian theology, meaning of Christ. It is a first book Dr. Robert C. Johnson, professo Systematic Theology at Western Se nary. In four chapters he def Christ as the revelation of God, interlocutor of God's judgment, atoning Messiah and incarnate De These chapters are peppered with lical citations and with quotations f the reformers, apt and often aston ing. As a corrective to casual Chr anity, Dr. Johnson turns to the "h side" of Jesus Christ who asked treme allegiance and enlarged the I into an extravagant demand. And author crowds us, page after page, ward that point of decision where fa is found.

The book's weakness is the weakn of most modern Christology. While Johnson can offer the classical theo of atonement, he fails to supply a m aphor that will "open" the doctrine modern minds. He explores (profou ly) the meaning of the Cross but d not beckon us beyond to a realm wh Christ is risen, the New Man reign in His New Creation.

The Meaning of Christ is the la addition to the Layman's Theologi Library, a series which would info the faith of nonclerical Christians combining crisp theology with co quial expression. Dr. Johnson's bo while less colloquial than concise, f fills this purpose for it is readab moving, and emphatically useful *David G. Buttrick, First Presbyteri Fredonia, New York.*

THE CIRCLE OF FAITH. *By Mar Bach. Hawthorn Books, Inc., $3.*

THIS distinguished student of co parative religion has written a other moving survey of contrasti viewpoints. This time it is of five livi persons within the Christian traditi each of whom has based his life on response to Christ's invitation to f low him. Dr. Bach has scored a *to de force* by the inclusion of such co trasts as that of Shoghi Effendi, sp itual leader of the Baha'i sect, and Pope Pius XII, spiritual leader Roman Catholics. Each is treated wi sympathetic understanding to lea what the attraction of Christ has bee Other portraits are of Therese Ne mann, Helen Keller and Albe Schweitzer.

If the book lacks in profundity b cause of its approach, it gains by t intimacy of its personal account. D Bach travelled around the world to p his question of what Jesus means these five religious spirits. He repo movingly. Already I have learned two librarians who have found th

the basis for stimulating discus-
among reading groups not nor-
attracted by religious books. The
ter can think of many hands into
helpfully to place it.—*Howard
, Plymouth Congregational
ch, Minneapolis, Minn.*

ING THE MOST OF WHAT LIFE
INGS. *By Theodore F. Adams.*
rper & Brothers. $2.50.

NLY a pastor could have writ-
ten this book. "Ted" Adams, emi-
churchman and president of the
ist World Alliance, is first and
the shepherd of his people. Here,
is book of sermons, he is preach-
to the needs of the people he
vs and loves best.
ow God works good out of all
gs for those who love him is the
e of all these messages. But em-
is is put on God's co-worker, the
on himself. One must learn to take
tever comes, but with God's help
nust learn to use it creatively.
very reader will find himself not
in one but in many places in this
, for the pastor talks about our
erfections, our few and small tal-
, the inevitable trials and sorrows.
the writer deals also with the great
rs and inspirations of our life. He
vs us how to abound, as well as
to be abased. This is an impor-
reminder that we need God in
successes as well as in our fail-
s.—*Hampton Adams, Park Avenue
ristian Church, New York City.*

E KINGDOM BEYOND CASTE. *By Lis-
n Pope. Friendship Press. $3.00.*

CCURATE data found in this beau-
tifully bound-and-printed small-
ize book is as rare as feathers on a
rmelon; but here it is for the reader
all its splendid rarity. Some people
the pocket size Ft. Knox, bank book
hand never misses. Never missing
mark, this volume serves a variety
purposes. It is a vault of quotable
tes for the preacher. It is a superb
ume full of sermon ideas scattered
oughout its pages. It will remain for
rs a resource for illustrative mate-
l to discuss "one aspect of the rela-
n of Christ to contemporary society,
d to discern the lineament of a king-
m beyond caste, already foreshad-
ed but yet to come."
This well-written book is historically
nd. As in a previous book, *Mill-
nds and Preachers,* the author goes
hind structured social stresses to au-
nticated, historical facts. His style is
eresting and stimulating, scholarly
d fascinating. For an up-to-date re-
inking of the function of the church
the kingdom beyond caste this book
bursting with singularly useful infor-
ation.
Dr. Liston Pope, dean of Yale Divin-
School, who hails originally from
stonia, North Carolina, has written
book to which the appropriate re-
onse is "Hallelujah!"—*C. Sumpter
gan, First Presbyterian Church,
gden, Utah.*

Coverage Good, But Not Complete

By Robert W. Burns

Peachtree Christian Church

Atlanta, Georgia

FROM 1929-1958 (February included) The Pulpit has published 1507 sermons. Of this number 458 (31 per cent) are on the Old Testament and 1049 (69 per cent) are on the New Testament.

There has been no sermon with its text from Joel, Obadiah, Nahum or Zephaniah. A study of each Testament shows the four favorite books to be as follows:

New Testament

Book	*Sermons*	*Percent*
Matthew	213	20.0
John	205	19.5
Luke	163	15.5
Acts	68	6.5
		62.5

Old Testament

Psalms	121	26.25
Isaiah	44	9.5
Genesis	37	8.0
Jeremiah	32	7.0
		30.75

Looking at the total for the whole Bible, the five most used books comprise about half the texts:

Matthew	213	14.0
John	215	13.75
Luke	163	10.8
Psalms	121	8.0
Acts	68	4.0
		50.4

The number of texts taken from each book of the Bible:

Matthew	213
John	205
Luke	163
Psalms	121
Acts	68
1 Corinthians	64
Romans	56
Mark	56
Hebrews	49
Isaiah	44
2 Corinthians	39
Genesis	37
Philippians	33
Jeremiah	32
Ephesians	30
Deuteronomy	29
Exodus	27
Revelation	27
Proverbs	26
1 John	21
Colossians	18
2 Timothy	17
1 Kings	16
Ecclesiastes	16
Job	15
Galatians	13
1 Peter	11
Joshua	10
2 Kings	8
2 Peter	7
1 Timothy	7
Judges	7
Zechariah	7
Hosea	7
Nehemiah	7
James	6
2 Samuel	4
Ezekiel	4
Malachi	4
Daniel	4
Amos	4
Habakkuk	4
Micah	4
2 Chronicles	4
1 Samuel	4
1 Thessalonians	3
Lamentations	2
Haggai	2
Leviticus	2
2 Thessalonians	2
2 John	2

One Each

Ezra
Song of Solomon
Ruth
Jonah
Esther
Numbers
1 Chronicles
3 John
Jude
Philemon
Titus

None

Joel
Obadiah
Nahum
Zephaniah

With obvious courage and considerable help—for heaven's sake, don't try it by yourself!—Dr. Burns recently dug into his share of everyman's "material-piled-yesterday-to-be-filed-someday," and turned up with a complete set of The Pulpit and the preceding statistics. He thought we would be interested (he was right) and under the same motivation we now pass them on to our readers. We assume that the slighted four minor prophets will now receive some long overdue major attention—Ed.

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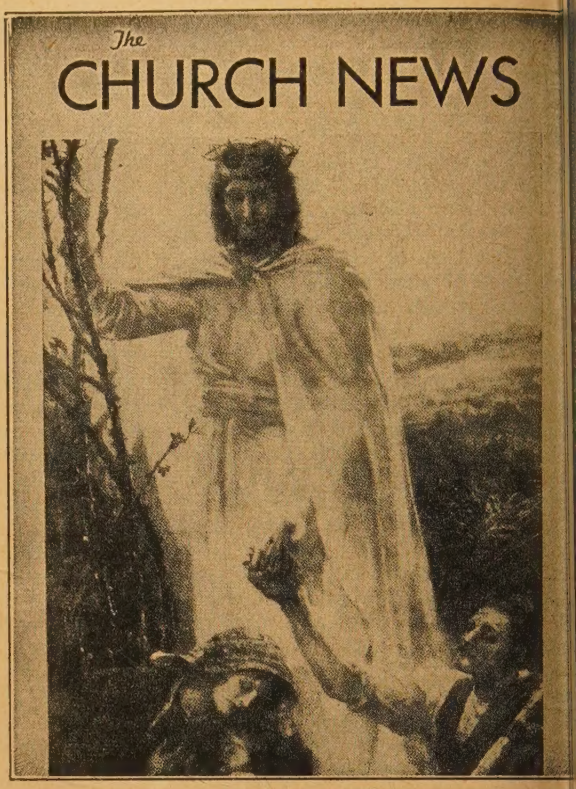

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